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NIEBUHR'S TRAVELS

THROUGH

A R A B I A,

AND OTHER

COUNTRIES IN THE EAST.

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# TRAVELS

THROUGH

## ARABIA.

AND OTHER

### COUNTRIES IN THE EAST.

PERFORMED BY

#### M. NIEBUHR,

NOW A CAPTAIN OF ENGINEERS IN THE SERVICE OF  
THE KING OF DENMARK

---

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

#### ROBERT HERON.

---

WITH NOTES BY THE TRANSLATOR;

AND

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS AND MAPS

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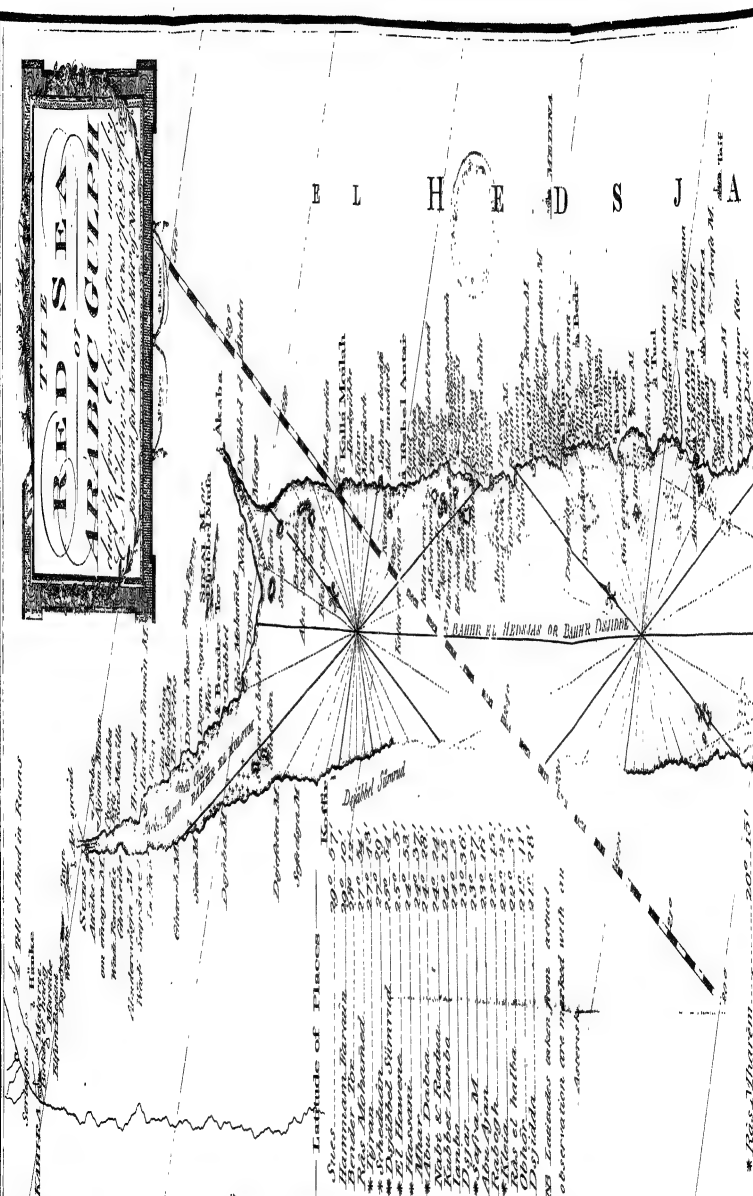


# THE RED SEA

## ARABIC GULF

English name of the Gulf of Aden  
 English name of the Gulf of Aden  
 English name of the Gulf of Aden

# E L H E D S J A

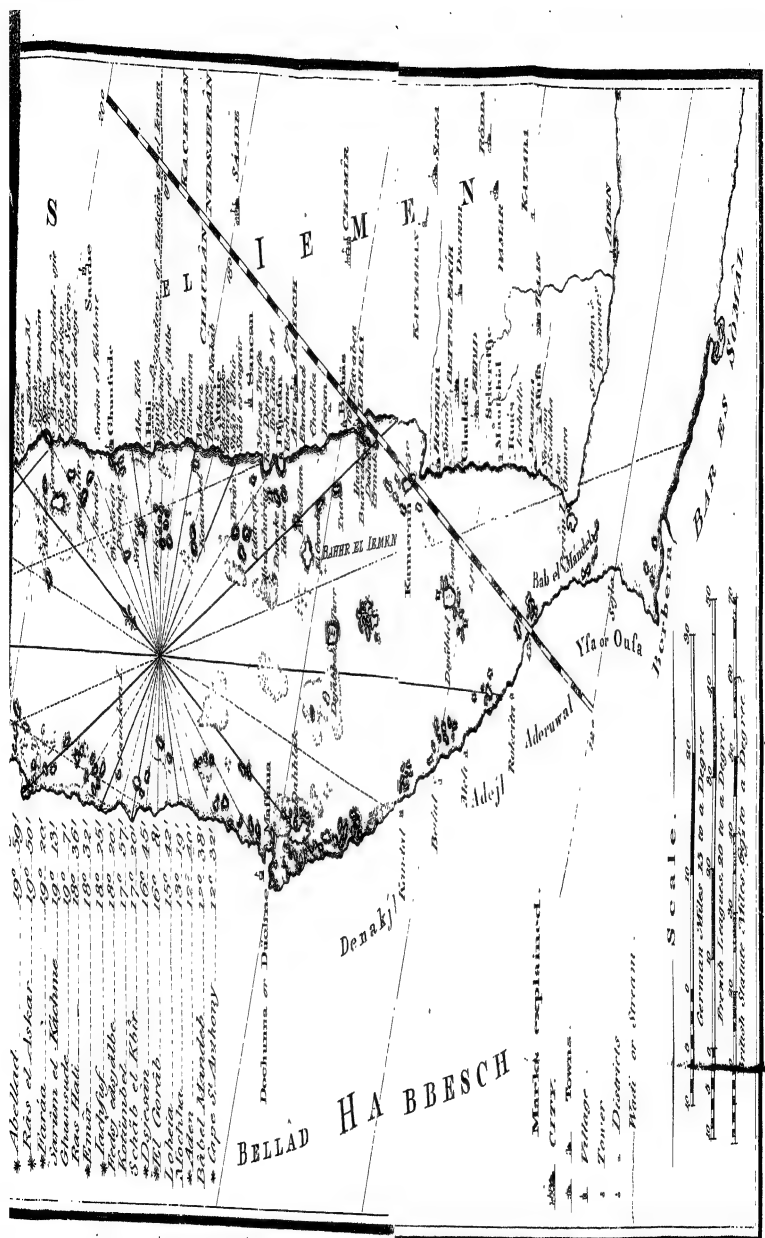


Latitude of Places

Place	Latitude
Suez	30° 0'
Hammat, Maraita	29° 10'
Ras Al-Mahmad	27° 0'
Tiran	27° 0'
Wharrah, Wilmrud	25° 0'
El-Hamra	25° 0'
Marwan	24° 0'
Alfa Dabra	24° 0'
Nabab & Raabaa	24° 0'
Kubbar Janba	24° 0'
Jamho	23° 0'
Safra Al	23° 0'
Alm. Yan	23° 0'
Rebogh	23° 0'
Reas el Malha	22° 0'
Obhor	22° 0'
Devidda	21° 0'

200 Indicators when from arrival observation are marked with in

\* Ras. Medjehon 20° 15'  
 \* Ras. Medjehon 20° 15'



# VOYAGE TO ARABIA . .

A VI

## TRAVELS

IN THAT COUNTRY, &c.

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### SECTION XVI.

OF ARABIA IN GENERAL

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#### CHAP. I.

*Concerning the Description of Arabia.*

MAN, even in society, where civilization has been carried perhaps to excess, where art extinguishes or disguises the sentiments of nature, never forgets his original destination. He is still fond even of the very shadow of that liberty, independence, and simplicity, which he has lost by refinement, although they are so congenial to his existence. He is charmed to meet with these again, even in the illusions of pastoral poetry.

VOL. II.

A

We

We are no less fond of tracing these native features of the human mind, where they are to be discovered in the records of remote ages, in which the natural manners of mankind appear undilguised by affectation, and not yet altered by the progress of arts or policy. Even without adverting to the causes of the pleasure which we feel, we are always pleased to find some faint traces even, of our natural and primary rights, and of the happiness to which we were originally destined.

If any people in the world afford in their history an instance of high antiquity, and of great simplicity of manners, the Arabs surely do. Coming among them, one can hardly help fancying one's self suddenly carried backwards to the ages which succeeded immediately after the flood. We are here tempted to imagine ourselves among the old patriarchs, with whose adventures we have been so much amused in our infant days. The language, which has been spoken for time immemorial, and which so nearly resembles that which we have been accustomed to regard as of the most distant antiquity, completes the illusion which the analogy of manners began.

The country in which this nation inhabit, affords many objects of curiosity, no less singular and interesting. Intersected by sandy deserts,  
and

and vast ranges of mountains, it presents on one side nothing but desolation in its most frightful form, while the other is adorned with all the beauties of the most fertile regions. Such is its position, that it enjoys, at once, all the advantages of hot and of temperate climates. The peculiar productions of regions, the most distant from one another, are produced here in equal perfection. Having never been conquered, Arabia has scarcely known any changes, but those produced by the hand of nature ; it bears none of the impressions of human fury, which appear in so many other places.

With all these circumstances, so naturally calculated to engage curiosity, Arabia has been hitherto but very little known. The ancients, who made their discoveries of countries, by conquering them, remained ignorant of the state and history of a region, into which their arms could never penetrate. What Greek and Latin authors mention concerning Arabia, proves, by its obscurity, their ignorance of almost every thing respecting the Arabs. Prejudices relative to the inconveniencies and dangers of travelling in Arabia, have hitherto kept the moderns in equal ignorance. I shall have occasion to remark, that our best books of Geography abound with capital errors upon this head ; as, for in-

flance, concerning the subjection of the Arabs to the Turks and Persians.

For these reasons, I have resolved to give a more minute and circumstantial description of a country, and a people, which deserve to be better known than they are at present. In the course of the former part of my travels, I have mentioned in part what I saw myself. But, as daring so short a stay in Arabia, I had time to travel over only a few of the provinces of that widely extended country, I sought information concerning the rest, from different honest and intelligent Arabs. This information I was most successful in obtaining among the men of letters and the merchants; persons in public offices were more entirely engrossed with their own affairs, and generally of a more reserved character.

This mode of obtaining my information appeared to carry with it several peculiar advantages; and it will be of no less utility, that I distinguish in this manner between what I observed myself, and what I was informed of by others. The reader will thus be enabled to discern between what I mention barely upon the authority of my own observation, and what I relate upon the concurrent evidence of many of the most enlightened persons in the nation. I shall find many more favourable opportunities  
of

of introducing certain particulars which I could not otherwise have inserted in the account of my travels, without interrupting too frequently the progress of the narrative. The reader will also be better entertained, when presented with a sketch, exhibiting the features no less of the country, than of the people inhabiting it.

I should have wished to add a brief compend of the history of this singular nation. But this I found impossible. In the East there are no libraries, and no men of deep erudition, resources which a traveller might find with great facility in Europe. Yet there are ancient Arabic historians; but the copies of their works are very rare, as I learned at Kahira and Mokha. It would be of consequence, however, to examine those authors, who are still unknown in Europe. The search, I am persuaded, could hardly prove fruitless. Those works would throw new light on several epochs in the history of ancient nations (A).

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Extent and the Divisions of Arabia.*

ARABIA, properly so called, is that great peninsula formed by the Arabic Gulph, the Indian Ocean, and the Persian Gulph. The ancients  
appear

appear to have comprehended under the name of Arabia, the whole tract lying between those seas, and a line drawn from the point of the Persian to that of the Arabic Gulph. This line, however, was not the real boundary of the country, but merely fancied such by ignorance.

Whatever may be thought of the limits assigned to this country by the ancients, a much wider extent must, at any rate, be allowed to present Arabia. In consequence of the conquests and settlements of the Arabs in Syria and Palestine, the desarts of these countries are now to be regarded as part of Arabia, which may thus be considered as being bounded on one side by the river Euphrates, and on the other by the isthmus of Suez.

Yet, we are not to consider all those countries in which this people have ever made conquests, or established colonies, as forming a part of Arabia. Of all nations, the Arabs have spread farthest over the world, and in all their wanderings, they have, better than any other nation, preserved their language, manners, and peculiar customs. From east to west, from the banks of the Senegal to the Indus, are colonies of Arabs to be met with; and between north and south, they are scattered from Euphrates to the island of Madagascar. The Tartar hordes have not occupied so wide an extent of the globe.

The



The Senegal in Africa is known to separate the negroes from those people who are only distinguished by a dark complexion. On its bank are some tribes of wandering Arabs, who live in tents. The mountainous parts of Morocco, and the republics of Barbary, contain many other tribes of the same nation, who, it should seem, spread through Africa in the progress of the conquests of the Caliphs. Those tribes are all governed by chiefs of their own; they speak Arabic, and in their manners resemble the rest of the Arabian nation. They are to be regarded rather as allies than subjects of the governments of the different countries in which they have established themselves.

On the eastern coast of Africa, the Arabs have spread themselves as far as to Mosambique. At least, the sovereigns of several kingdoms upon that coast were anciently Arabs. The same nation made themselves likewise masters of the isles of *Comorra*, and of a part of the isle of *Madagascar*, in which Arab colonies still remain.

As I could learn nothing very particular concerning the Arab tribes, dispersed through Africa, I shall not pretend to speak of them (B); nor do I need to say any thing more of the Egyptian Arabs, after what I have already mentioned concerning them, in the account of my travels in that country.

I shall likewise pass on, without noticing the pretended Arabian colonies in Habbesch, or examining the opinion, which represents the Abyssinians as originally sprung from the inhabitants of Arabia. This notion, which has been advanced by some learned men, depends on probabilities so slender, and so uncertain, that, to enter into a particular discussion of them, would be taking more pains about them, than they are worth (c).

But I cannot pass, in equal silence, over the more considerable colonies, which, although they are also settled without the limits of Arabia, are, however, nearer to it. I mean the Arabs upon the southern coast of Persia, who are commonly in alliance with, and sometimes subject to the neighbouring Schiechs. A variety of circumstances concur to indicate, that these tribes were settled along the Persian Gulph, before the conquests of the Caliphs, and have ever preserved their independence. It is ridiculous in our Geographers, to represent a part of Arabia, as subject to the Kings of Persia; when, so far from this, the Persian monarchs have never been masters of the sea-coast of their own dominions, but have patiently suffered it to remain in the possession of the Arabians.

In order to proceed upon the most natural plan, in the geographical delineation of this country,

mong the Arabs, I have not thought of attending to this arbitrary division of the country.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the Revolutions of Arabia.*

ALL that is known concerning the earliest period of the history of this country, is, that it was governed in those days by potent monarchs, called *Tobba*. This is thought to have been a title common to all those Princes, as the name of *Pharaoh* was to the ancient Sovereigns of Egypt.

There exists, however, a pretty distinct tradition among the learned Arabs, with respect to those ancient Kings, which deserves to be taken notice of. They pretend to know, from ancient monuments, that *Tobba* was the family name of those Sovereigns, that they came from the neighbourhood of Samarcand, were worshippers of fire, and conquered and civilized Arabia. This tradition accords with the plausible hypothesis of an ingenious writer, who derives the knowledge and civilization of the people of the south, from a nation who once flourished in that part of Tartary in which Samarcand is situate (D).

One

One thing I had occasion to observe myself, which seems to me to make in favour of the same hypothesis. A Dutch renegado, who had travelled several times over Arabia, showed me, at Mokha, a copy of an inscription, in strange and unknown characters, which he had found in a province remote from the sea coast. I was then in ill health, and neglected to copy it. But the uncommon form of the characters, which consisted entirely of straight lines, made such an impression upon my memory, that, on my return, I distinguished the inscriptions at Persepolis to be in the same alphabet (ε). A tradition prevails through Persia, that the conqueror who founded Persepolis, was originally from the vicinity of Samarcand; so that both the Arabians and the Persians would appear to have had Sovereigns from the same nation, who spoke the same language, or at least employed the same characters in writing.

Whatever may have been the origin of those conquerors, many circumstances concur to prove that, in remote times, the Arabians acted an important part on the theatre of human affairs; although the memory of the revolutions which took place among them has not been handed down to posterity. There can be no doubt of their having conquered Egypt at a time previous to the commencement of Grecian history.

What

What Greek historians say of the shepherd-kings of Egypt, can be referred to none but the Arabs. The famous republic of robbers must undoubtedly have been a tribe of this nation, who, after the expulsion of their countrymen, maintained themselves for several ages in a district in lower Egypt.

It is certain that most of the nations so frequently mentioned in the history of the Jews, must have been Arab tribes, who went often to war with those turbulent neighbours, and sometimes subdued them. It may even be conjectured, that the Jews themselves were originally Arabs, descended from some branch of these far spread tribes (†).

Those events, in the fate of this nation, which took place in the time of the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Parthians, are all unknown to us; except some faint and unsuccessful attempts which these conquerors made to reduce the Arabians under subjection. They succeeded only against a few tribes, settled in the cities on the Arabic Gulph, or in the vicinity of Syria, and even here their power was extremely transient.

Arabia seems to have been a rich and powerful country in the time of the ancient Egyptians. The aversion of these last for the sea, left to the Arabs the whole commerce with India, by the  
Arabic

Arabic Gulph. That trade, when once brought within this channel, continued to flow through it, under the Ptolemies, the Romans, the Greek Emperors, and the Caliphs of Egypt. But the discovery of a new line of communication with India, deprived Arabia of the advantages of this traffic, and produced the rapid decline of many flourishing cities (g).

It must have been during the more splendid ages of the existence of this nation, that the *Hamjare* Kings reigned over a great part of Arabia. The history of those Princes is so involved in obscurity, that we are ignorant even of their origin, and know not to what nation they properly belonged. But, they were probably indigenous.

Neither do we know in what period to place the Abyssinian invasion, of which some authors speak. That people must have attacked the Arabs, of purpose to convert them to Christianity. It is even pretended that, after subduing a part of Arabia, they accomplished the purpose of their enterprise, and a great part of the Arabs became Christians. But the circumstances of this event are so vague, and have so fabulous an air, that we will be in the right to doubt if it ever took place; or at least, if it was produced by the causes to which it has been ascribed (h).

A revolution, of the reality of which we are more certain, and which involved in it more important consequences, was that which Mahomet effected in the religion, and the political state of his country. This fortunate usurper, with the arms of his countrymen, spread his conquests over distant regions. His successors, for a while, prosecuted the career of conquest with the same success. But neither he, nor the Caliphs, could ever entirely subdue their own nation. Many chiefs in the interior parts of the country, still maintained their independence, without respecting the Caliph in any other light than as the head of their religion. The authority of the Caliphs was merely spiritual, except in their dominions over a part of the coast, where they were acknowledged as Sovereigns (I).

After the ruin of the power of the Caliphate by the Turks, Arabia shook off the yoke to which it had been in part subjected, and came to be governed, as formerly, by a number of chiefs, more or less powerful, descended from different indigenous families.

No neighbouring power ever attempted to subdue this country, till the Portuguese penetrated to India, and made their appearance in the Red Sea. Then, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Sultan EL GURX, desirous to  
rid

rid himself of those new comers, whom he viewed as dangerous, fitted out a fleet to expel the Portuguese. That fleet, availing themselves of the opportunity, seized almost all the sea-port towns of Arabia. But, when the dynasty of the Mammalukes was terminated by the Turks, these cities fell again into the hands of their natural Sovereigns.

The Turks continued the war with the Portuguese, in order to secure Egypt, their new conquest. Soliman Pacha, at the head of a powerful fleet, after the example of the last Sultan of the Mammalukes, seized all the towns upon the Arabic Gulph. His successors pushed their conquests still farther, and subdued great part of Yemen, penetrating backwards to the Highlands; so that Arabia became almost entirely a province of the Sultan of Constantinople, and was governed by Pachas, like the other provinces of the Ottoman empire.

In the interior parts, however, there still were independent Princes and Schiechs, who had never been subdued, but continued to harass the Turks, and to drive them towards the coasts. After various reiterated efforts, a Prince of the family now reigning at Sana, at length succeeded, about the middle of the last century, and obliged the Turkish nation to evacuate all the places upon the Arabian coast, which they  
had



had occupied for more than a century. The Turks now possess nothing in this country, but a precarious authority in the city of Jidda : And it is therefore absurd to reckon Arabia among the Ottoman provinces, since it is properly to be considered as independent of all foreign Powers.

A people who, like the Arabs, have so long detached themselves from the rest of the world, cannot undergo any very important revolutions, that may deserve to be commemorated in history. The events which take place among them, are only petty wars and trifling conquests, worthy of their poor chiefs, and narrow divisions of territory. I shall not notice them, therefore, unless when in the description of any province, some event comes into view, that is remarkable either for its singularity, or for its influence upon the affairs of other nations.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Government of the Arabs.*

THE most natural authority is that of a father over his family, as obedience is here founded upon the opinion of benevolence in the ruler. When the mournful survivors of the human  
race

race settled themselves anew, after the awful revolution by which the globe was, for a time, divested of its beauty, and depopulated; every family submitted readily to the guidance and direction of him to whom they owed their existence.

As those families multiplied, the younger branches still retained some respect for the eldest branch. Of all the progeny, it was esteemed the nearest to the parent stem. And, altho' the subdivisions became more and more numerous, they still regarded themselves as composing but one body, in remembrance of their common origin. Such an assemblage of families, all sprung from the same stock, forms what we call a tribe. It was, in this manner, easy for the representative of the eldest branch to retain somewhat of the primary paternal authority over the whole tribe to which he belonged.

Sometimes, when a family became too numerous, it divided from the rest with which it was connected, and formed a new tribe. Upon other occasions, when several tribes found themselves separately too weak to resist a common enemy, they would combine, and acknowledge one common chief. And sometimes it would happen, that a numerous tribe might force some others that were weaker, to unite themselves to,

and become dependent upon it; but seldom has this dependence degenerated into slavish subjection.

This primitive form of government, which has ever subsisted without alteration among the Arabs, proves the antiquity of this people, and renders their present state more interesting than it would otherwise be. Among the Bedouins it is preserved in all its purity. In other parts of Arabia, it has suffered some changes, but yet is not materially altered. I shall have occasion to take notice of these, such as they are, when I come to describe each particular province by itself. For the present, I shall content myself with making some general reflections upon the spirit of the Arabian government.

The Bedouins, or pastoral Arabs, who live in tents, have many Schiechs, each of whom governs his family with power almost absolute. All the Schiechs, however, who belong to the same tribe, acknowledge a common chief, who is called *Schech es Scheuch*, Schiech of Schiechs, or *Schech el Kbir*, and whose authority is limited by custom. The dignity of Grand Schiech is hereditary in a certain family; but the inferior Schiechs, upon the death of a Grand Schiech, choose the successor out of his family, without regard to age or lineal succession, or any other consideration, except superiority of abilities.

abilities. This right of election, with their other privileges, obliges the Grand Schiech to treat the inferior Schiechs rather as associates than as subjects, sharing with them his sovereign authority. The spirit of liberty, with which this warlike nation are animated, renders them incapable of servitude.

This spirit is less sensibly felt among those who live in towns, or are employed in husbandry. It was easier to reduce them under subjection. In the fertile districts of this country, there have always been monarchies, more or less extensive, formed, either by conquest, or by religious prejudices. Such are the present dominions of the *Sherriffe of Mecca*, of the *Imams of Sana and Maskat*, and of some princes in the province of *Hadramaut*. However, as these countries are intersected by large ranges of mountains, the mountains are occupied by independent Shiechs.

But, although so many independent chieftains have their domains interspersed through the territories of those several sovereigns, yet nothing of the feudal form of government appears here. The Schiechs possess no fiefs; they have only a sort of property in the persons of the people of their several tribes. Even those who seem to be tributary subjects to the princes within whose dominions they dwell, are not actually

tually so. They remain independent; and the tribute which they pay is nothing but a tithe for the use of the land of which they are in some sort farmers. Such are the Schiechs settled in Syria, Egypt, and over all Mount Atlas (J).

A nation of this character cannot readily sink into a servile subjection to arbitrary power. Despotism would never have been known, even in the slightest degree, in Arabia, had it not been for theocracy, the usual source of it. The Imams being reputed successors of Mahomet, and his descendants, and being acknowledged both as temporal and spiritual heads within their dominions, have thus found means to abuse the simplicity of their subjects, and to enlarge their authority. Nevertheless, the genius of the people, their customs, and even their religion, are all inimical to the progress of despotism, and concur to check the Imams in the exercise of their power.

The idea of forming republican governments seems never to have occurred to the Arabians. This form is not a necessary consequence of the primitive condition of mankind. It must have originated among people whose patience was exhausted by the outrages of arbitrary power; or sometimes, perhaps, from the fortuitous concurrence of persons not connected by the ties of family-relation. The united states of Haschidu  
Bakil

Bekil are not so much a federative republic, as an association of several petty princes, for the purpose of mutual defence against their common enemies. Their government resembles that of the German empire, not the States of Switzerland, or the United Provinces. Concerning the pretended Republic of Brava, upon the eastern coast of Africa, little certain is known. There is ground for thinking that it likewise is merely a confederation among the Arabian Schiechs in that country.

The colony of Jews, who occupy a district in the province of Hedjas, are governed by a hereditary independent Schiech. Having been for ages divided from their countrymen, they have adopted that form of government which they saw prevalent among their immediate neighbours.

This multiplicity of petty sovereigns occasions several inconveniencies to the people in general. Wars cannot but frequently arise among states whose territories are so intermingled together, and whose sovereigns have such a variety of jarring interests to manage. But, happily, these quarrels are scarcely ever productive of very fatal consequences. An army of a thousand Arabs will take to flight, and think themselves routed, if they lose but seven or eight of their number.

Thus

Thus are these contests terminated as easily as excited.

No doubt, such a multitude of nobles and petty princes, whose numbers are continually increased by polygamy, must have an unfavourable influence upon the general happiness of the people. It strikes one with surprise, to see the Arabs, in a country so rich and fertile, uncomfortably lodged, indifferently fed, ill clothed, and destitute of almost all the conveniencies of life. But the causes fully account for the effects.

The poverty of the wandering Arabs is plainly voluntary. They prefer liberty to wealth, pastoral simplicity to a life of constraint and toil, which might procure them a greater variety of gratifications. Those living in cities, or employed in the cultivation of the land, are kept in poverty, by the exorbitancy of the taxes exacted from them. The whole substance of the people is consumed in the support of their numerous princes and priests. The instance of the territory of Zebid, which I adduced in my account of that city, shews that the husbandman cannot bear such excessive imposts without being reduced to misery.

One general cause of the impoverishment of Arabia is, no doubt, its having ceased to be the channel of the trade with India, since the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope.

Yet,

Yet, if the lands were better cultivated, this country might, without the aid of foreign trade, afford sufficient resources to supply all its inhabitants with abundance of the necessaries and common conveniencies of life.

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## SECTION XVII.

OF THE PROVINCE OF HEDJAS,

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### CHAP. I.

*Of the general Appearance of this Province, and of some of the Towns in it.*

HEDJAS is bounded on the east side by Nejed; on the north by the desert of Sinai; on the south by Yemen; and on the west by the Arabic Gulph. Its interior limits I cannot pretend to know distinctly, having seen only the sea-coast: Whatever I may mention concerning the other parts is entirely from hearsay.

By what I have heard, this district bears an entire resemblance to Yemen. From the sea-shore, a plain, varying in breadth, stretches backwards to the bottom of a chain of mountains, running in



a direction parallel to the Red Sea. This plain, like Tehama, is entirely sandy and barren, with the exception only of the openings of the vallies, which may be watered by torrents from the mountains.

The highlands of Hedjas produce abundance of fruits, and other commodities of various kinds: Yet I have not heard coffee mentioned among their productions. Balm of Mecca comes from those lofty regions, and chiefly from the extensive mountain of *Safra*, which is a three days journey distant from the Arabic Gulph.

This barren plain cannot be populous. I have mentioned already, that I could see no towns or villages in my passage from Suez to Loheya. I have described *Jambo*, *Jidda*, and *Ghunfude*, the only towns or harbours on all this extensive coast. The other villages, that may be thinly scattered here and there, are too few and too paltry to merit notice.

In the interior parts of this country, I could discover no considerable city, except *Taaif*, situate upon a lofty mountain, in so agreeable a country, that the Arabs compare its environs to those of Damascus and Sana. This city supplies Jidda and Mecca with excellent fruits, particularly raisins, and carries on a considerable trade in almonds, which grow in great plenty in its territories.

There

There are some towns, of no great consequence, belonging to the Schiech of the tribe of *Harb*. I was also told of a charming valley, called *Wadi Fatima*, between Mecca and Medina, which Mahomet gave for dowry to his favourite daughter Fatima, and which is presently possessed by the *Dani Barkad*, a younger branch of the reigning family of Mecca, and consequently descendants from that princess.

The curiosities of Mecca and Medina, the two capitals of Hedjas, are so numerous, that each of these cities must be considered in a chapter by itself.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Power of the Turks in Hedjas.*

THE Grand Signior styles himself Sovereign of Hedjas ; and our geographers, upon the faith of that empty title, represent this part of Arabia as a province of the Turkish empire. But, the authority of the Sultan is here nothing but a mere shadow, which the Arabs would long since have annihilated, if they had not found their interest in preserving it.

Notwithstanding the lofty pretensions of the Grand Signior, his power in Arabia consists solely in a few slender prerogatives. He sends

yearly caravans to Mecca, with troops to protect them, that are often obliged to make their way by force of arms. Like any other powerful Sovereign, when he chooses to oppress a weak neighbour, he can depose the reigning Sherriffe, and exalt another, while his caravan lords it at Mecca. He sends a Pacha to Jidda, who shares the government of this city with the Sherriffe, but who dares neither go to the seat of his government, nor return from it, unless when he can be protected by the great caravan. Lastly, the Arabs suffer the Turkish Sovereign to maintain, for the security of the pilgrims, and in order to guard the wells, a few janizaries, cooped up in some wretched towers.

The revenues which he draws from this pretended province are proportionate to his power in it. The Sultan divides with the Sherriffe the duties paid at the custom-house of Jidda. But, the revenue thus obtained, is not sufficient to defray the expences of the Pacha's household. A Turk, therefore, thinks himself disgraced when nominated to this fine government, and is unhappy till he be recalled.

If the Arabs did not receive, every year, large sums of money; and other advantages of all sorts from the Sultan, they would long since have expelled this handful of Turks from their country. The Sultan allows large pensions to all the Sher-

Sherriffes, and to the principal nobility of Hedjas, as guardians of the sacred family. With these pensions, and the freight of four or five large vessels, which he sends every year to Jidda, laden with provisions, he supports almost all the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina. During the whole time, while the pilgrims remain in the city of Mecca, as much water as two thousand camels can bear is daily distributed gratis ; not to speak of the vast number of presents with which he adorns the *Kaba*, and gratifies the descendants of Mahomet.

The principal Arabs likewise gain by the many pious foundations established by the Sultans, or by opulent private persons among the Turks, at different holy places. Through all the cities of the Ottoman empire are *kans*, baths, and houses belonging to the *Kaba*. Some persons, to secure their property, after their decease, from the rapacity of despotism, bequeath it, failing their own family, to the mosque at Mecca. The revenues of this mosque, and of the *kaba*, are shared between the Sherriffe and the chief nobility of Hedjás. These Arabs would therefore endanger their income, if they offered to break off an apparent dependence, which flatters the Sultan's vanity, without affecting their liberty.

The Sultan no longer commands respect upon the Arabic Gulph. Possessing only a precarious  
authoritv

authority over Egypt, and having but a poor navy, he cannot hinder the Arabs from plundering Turkish ships, whenever these approach so near to the shores as to fall into their hands, nor yet punish such acts of insolent piracy.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the Sheriffe of Mecca.*

SHERRIFFE, as I have already had occasion to remark, is the title of the descendants of Mahomet by *Hassan ibn Ali*. Although this branch of the posterity of Mahomet have never attained to the dignities of Caliph or Imam, they, however, appear to have always enjoyed the sovereignty over most of the cities in Hedjas.

The descendants of *Hassan ibn Ali* are now divided into several branches, of which the family of *Ali Bunemi*, consisting at least of three hundred individuals, enjoy the sole right to the throne of Mecca. The *Ali Bunemi* are, again, subdivided into two subordinate branches, *Darii Sajid*, and *Darii Barkad*; of whom sometimes the one, sometimes the other, have given sovereigns to Mecca and Medina, when these were separate states.

Not only is the Turkish Sultan indifferent about the order of succession in this family,  
but

but he seems even to foment the dissensions which arise among them, and favours the strongest, merely that he may weaken them all. As the order of succession is not determinately fixed, and the Sheriffs may all aspire alike to the sovereign power, this uncertainty of right, aided by the intrigues of the Turkish officers, occasions frequent revolutions. The Grand Sheriffe is seldom able to maintain himself on the throne; and it still seldomer happens that his reign is not disturbed by the revolt of his nearest relations. There have been instances of a nephew succeeding his uncle, an uncle succeeding his nephew; and sometimes of a person, from a remote branch, coming in the room of the reigning prince of the ancient house.

When I was in Arabia, in 1763, the reigning Sheriffe *Mesad* had sitten fourteen years on the throne, and, during all that period, had been continually at war with the neighbouring Arabs, and with his own nearest relations sometimes. A few years before, the Pacha of Syria had deposed him, and raised his younger brother to the sovereign dignity in his stead. But, after the departure of the caravan, *Jesfar*, the new Sheriffe, not being able to maintain himself on the throne, was obliged to resign the sovereignty

verieignty again to *Mesad*. *Achmet*, the second brother of the Sherriffe, who was much beloved by the Arabs, threatened to attack Mecca while we were at Jidda. We were soon after informed of the termination of the quarrel, and of Achmet's return to Mecca, where he continued to live peaceably in a private character.

These examples shew, that the Mussulmans observe not the law which forbids them to bear arms against their holy places. An Egyptian Bey even presumed, a few years since, to plant some small cannons within the compass of the Kaba, upon a small tower, from which he fired over that sacred mansion, upon the palace of Sherriffe Mesad, with whom he was at variance.

The dominions of the Sherriffe comprehend the cities of Mecca, Medina, Jambo, Taaif, Sadié, Ghunfude, Hali, and thirteen others less considerable, all situate in Hedjas. Near Taaif is the lofty mountain of *Gazwan*, which, according to Arabian authors, is covered with snow and frost in the midst of summer. As these dominions are neither opulent nor extensive, the revenue of their Sovereign cannot be considerable.

He finds a rich resource, however, in the imposts levied on pilgrims, and in the gratuities offered him by Mussulman monarchs. Every pilgrim pays a tax of from ten to an hundred crowns.

crowns, in proportion to his ability. The Great Mogul remits annually sixty thousand rousees to the Sherriffe, by an assignment upon the government of Surat. Indeed, since the English made themselves masters of this city, and the territory belonging to it, the Nabob of Surat has no longer been able to pay the sum. The Sherriffe once demanded it of the English, as the possessors of Surat; and, till they should satisfy him, forbade their captains to leave the port of Jidda. But the English disregarding this prohibition, the Sherriffe complained to the Ottoman Porte, and they communicated his complaints to the English ambassador. He at the same time opened a negotiation with the nominal Nabob, who resides in Surat. But these steps proved all fruitless: And the Sovereign of Mecca seems not likely to be ever more benefited by the contribution from India.

The power of the Sherriffe extends not to spiritual matters. These are entirely managed by the heads of the clergy, of different sects, who are resident at Mecca. Rigid Mussulmans, such as the Turks, are not very favourable in their sentiments of the Sherriffes, but suspect their orthodoxy, and look upon them as secretly attached to the tolerant sect of the *Zeidi*.



## CHAP. IV.

*Of the City of Mecca.*

THIS city is situate in a dry and barren tract of country, a full day's journey from Jidda. A few leagues beyond it, nearer the highlands, however, abundance of excellent fruits is to be found. In the summer months, the heat is excessive at Mecca; and, to avoid and moderate it as much as possible, the inhabitants carefully shut their windows and water the streets. There have been instances of persons suffocated in the middle of the streets by the burning wind called *Sargum* or *Samel*.

As a great part of the first nobility in Hedjas live at Mecca, the buildings are better here than in any other city in Arabia. Among its elegant edifices, the most remarkable is the famous *Kaba*, or house of God, which was held in high veneration by the Arabians, even before the days of Mahomet.

My curiosity would have led me to see this sacred and singular structure; but no Christian dares enter Mecca. Not that there is any such express prohibition in the laws of Mahomet, or that liberal-minded Mahometans could be offended; but the prejudices of the people in general,

nial, with respect to the sanctity of the place, make them think that it would be profaned by the feet of infidel Christians. They even persuade themselves, that Christians are restrained from approaching it by a supernatural power. They tell of an infidel, who audaciously advanced within sight of Mecca, but was there attacked by all the dogs of the city, and was so struck with the miracle, and with the august aspect of the Kaba, that he immediately became Mussulman.

There is therefore ground for the presumption, that all the Christians of Europe, who describe Mecca as eye-witnesses, have been renegadoes who have escaped from Turkey. A recent example confirms this suspicion. Upon a promise of being suffered to adhere to his religion, a French surgeon was prevailed with to attend the Emir Hadgi to Mecca, in the quality of his physician. But he had not proceeded far, when he was forced to submit to circumcision, and then suffered to continue his journey.

Although the Mahometans permit not Europeans to visit Mecca, they make no difficulty of describing the Kaba to them. I even obtained at Kahira a drawing of that holy place, which I had afterwards an opportunity of correcting, from another draught by a Turkish painter. This painter gained his livelihood by making

such draughts of the Kaba, and selling them to pilgrims.

To judge from those designs, and from the relations of many Mussulmans of sufficient veracity, the Kaba must be an awkward shapeless building; a sort of square tower it is, covered on the top with a piece of black gold-embroidered silk stuff. This stuff is wrought at Kahira, and changed every year at the expence of the Turkish Sultan. The gutters upon this building are of pure gold.

What seems to be most magnificent about this sacred edifice, is the arcades around the square in which the Kaba stands. They speak, in terms of high admiration, of a vast number of lamps and candlesticks of gold and silver with which those arcades are illuminated. However, even by these accounts, in which the truth is apparently exaggerated, the riches of the Kaba are far from equal in value to what is displayed in some Catholic churches in Europe.

In the Kaba is particularly one singular relic, which is regarded with extreme veneration. This is the famous black stone, said to have been brought by the angel Gabriel in order to the construction of that edifice. The stone, according to the account of the clergy, was, at first, of a bright white colour, so as even to dazzle the eyes at the distance of four days journey;

journey; but it wept so long, and so abundantly for the sins of mankind, that it became at length opaque, and at last absolutely black. This stone, of so compassionate a character, every Mussulman must kiss, or at least touch, every time he goes round the Kaba. Neither the stone of Abraham, nor that of Ismael, receives the same honours; pilgrims are not obliged either to visit or to kiss them.

The Arabs venerate the Kaba, as having been built by Abraham, and having been his house of prayer. Within the same inclosure is the well of *Zemzem*, valued for the excellence of its water, and no less for its miraculous origin. Hagar, when banished by her master, set little Ismael down here, while she should find some water to quench his thirst. Returning, after an unsuccessful search, she was surprised to see a spring bursting up from the ground between the child's legs. That spring is the present well of *Zemzem*.

Another ornament of the Kaba, is a row of metal pillars surrounding it. These pillars are joined by chains, on which hang a vast number of silver lamps. The porticos or arcades above mentioned are designed to protect the pilgrims from the torrid heat of the day. They answer likewise another purpose; for the merchants, of whom

whom great numbers accompany the caravans, expose their wares for sale under those arcades.

The Mahometans have such high ideas of the sanctity of Mecca, that they suppose it to extend even to the environs of the city. Its territory is reputed sacred to a certain distance round, which is indicated by marks set for this purpose. Every caravan find one of those marks on their way, which warns the pilgrims to put on the modest garb which it becomes them to wear on that sacred ground,

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Pilgrimage of the Mussulmans.*

EVERY Mussulman, it is well known, is obliged, once in his life, to visit Mecca, and perform acts of devotion in the sacred places. If this law were strictly observed, the concourse of pilgrims would be immense; nor could the city contain such crowds from every country in which the Mahometan religion has been introduced. It may be presumed, therefore, that none but such as are more than ordinarily devout discharge this duty.

Those indeed, whose circumstances do not admit of their undertaking so distant a journey, are allowed to hire a person to perform it for them.

them. But a pilgrim, in this character, can act for no more than one person at the same time; and, to prevent imposture, he must bring back a formal attestation from an Imam in Mecca, bearing, that he has actually performed the appointed devotional exercises in the holy places, in the name of such a person, living or dead; for, even after the death of a man, who, during his life, neglected the fulfilling of this point of the law, the duty may still be discharged in his name, and for his benefit. I have sometimes met with pilgrims by profession, who had been ill paid by their employers, and were obliged to ask alms.

Few as the caravans are, in proportion to the numbers of the Mussulmans, even those few are composed, in great part, of persons who go upon other motives than devotion; such as merchants, who think this the safest opportunity for the conveyance of their goods, and the most favourable for the sale of them;---purveyors of all sorts, who furnish the pilgrims with necessaries; and soldiers, paid by the caravan for escorting them. From this it happens, that many persons have seen Mecca several times, without ever visiting it upon any but views of interest.

The most considerable of these caravans is that of Syria, commanded by the Pacha of Damascus. At a certain distance from Mecca, it joins that from Egypt, which is the second in numbers.

bers, and is conducted by a Bey, who takes the title of Emir Hadgi. A third comes from Yemen ; and a fourth, still smaller in numbers, from the country of Lachica. A few pilgrims come by the Red Sea, and from the Arabian settlements on the coast of Africa. The Persians join that which is from Bagdad, and is conducted by the Pacha. *His* post is lucrative ; for he squeezes large sums from the Persian heretics.

When giving an account of what I saw on board our vessel, in the passage between Suez and Jidda, I had occasion to speak of the Ihram, and of the place where pilgrims are obliged to assume that garb of humility. I may add, that they must proceed without delay to Mecca, as soon as they arrive on the border of the sacred territory. A Greek renegadoe, who had come in our company from Suez, was disposed to rest for some time at Jidda ; but the reproaches which he found thrown out upon him, for such an instance of indifference about the object of his journey, obliged him to set off for Mecca sooner than was favourable to the state of his business in Jidda.

Besides, it is truly advantageous to a pilgrim to haste forward to the holy places. If he has not been present from the commencement, at the celebration of all the ceremonies, and performed every appointed act of devotion, he can-

not obtain the title of *Hadgi*; an honour much coveted by the Turks, because it confers substantial privileges, and commands respect to those who bear it. The rarity of this title, in Mahometan countries, is a proof how negligently the law enjoining pilgrimage is observed.

A similar custom prevails among the Christians in the east, who also make much ado about the title of *Hadgi* or *Mokdafi*, which they gave to pilgrims of their communion. In order to acquire this title, it is not enough for a person to go in pilgrimage to Jerusalem; he must spend the season of the passover in that city, and assist at all the ceremonies in the holy weeks (κ).

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the City of Medina.*

ABOUT a day's journey distant from the port of Jambo stands Medina, a city of moderate extent, furrounded with *indifferent* walls, and situate in a sandy plain. It belongs to the Sheriffe of Mecca, but has of late been governed by a Sovereign of its own, of the family of *Darii Barkad*. At this present time, the Sherriffe rules it by a Vizir, who must be of the royal family.

Before



Before the days of Mahomet, this city was called *Yathreb*. But it was called *Medinet en Nebbi*, the City of the Prophet; from the period at which Mahomet, upon his expulsion out of Mecca by the Koreischites, took refuge here, and continued to make it the place of his residence for the rest of his life.

The tomb of Mahomet at Medina is held in respect by the Mussulmans; but they are not obliged to visit it in order to the performance of any devotional exercises; only, as the caravans from Syria necessarily pass near by Medina, in their return from Mecca, they turn aside to behold the Prophet's tomb.

I also obtained from a Turk a drawing of the mosque in which the tomb stands. It is situate in a corner of the great square; whereas the Ka-ba is in the middle of the square at Mecca. For fear that the people might superstitiously offer worship to the ashes of the Prophet, the tomb is inclosed within iron rails, and is only to be seen by looking through these. It is of plain masonry-work, in the form of a chest; and this is all the monument. I could never learn the origin of the ridiculous story, which has been circulated in Europe, concerning vast magnets said to support the coffin of Mahomet in the air.

This tomb is placed between two other tombs, in which rest the ashes of the two first Caliphs.

Al-

Although not more magnificent than the tombs of the founders of most other mosques, the building that covers it, is hung with a piece of silk stuff embroidered with gold, which is renewed every seven years by the Pacha of Damascus.

This building is guarded by forty eunuchs, chiefly for the security of the treasure which is said to be kept in it. This treasure consists chiefly of precious stones, the offerings of rich Mussulmans. But there was evidently such a mixture of fable in the account I received of it, that I knew not what to think. Several respectable Mahometans seriously assured me, that the philosopher's stone, or a large quantity of powder for converting other metals into fine gold, was one of the most valuable articles of that treasure. An eminent Arabian merchant informed me, that the guard was posted for no other purpose but to keep off the populace, who had begun to throw dirt upon the tomb, which they afterwards scraped off, and preserved as a sort of relic.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the independent Schiechs, Arab and Jewiss.*

THE highlands of Hedjas are possessed by a number of independent Sovereign Schiechs. The

most powerful of these is the Schiech of the tribe of *Harb*, who can bring two thousand men into the field. He resides in the city of *Makschous*; and his domains contain several cities, and a number of villages.

During the months favourable for pasturage, the most distinguished persons of this tribe live in tents; in the rest of the year, they inhabit the towns and villages. The lower class live, commonly through the whole year, in huts thatched with grafs. This principality is situate upon the mountains between Mecca and Medina.

I could not learn either the names or the situation of the territories of the other independent Schiechs in this province. What I know is, that they all live with their subjects in towns and villages, thro' the whole year, and have for their places of defence some castles built upon precipitous rocks. They sometimes join their neighbours to attack the Turkish caravans; but these never pass thro' *their* dominions.

The chief of the tribe of *Harb* is the person who chiefly harraffes the caravans, and lays them under contribution. Unless the Syrians and Egyptians pay the tribute he demands, for permission to pass through his territories, he musters up an army of his own subjects and his  
neigh-

neighbours, all of whom are very willing to pillage a caravan.

The most remarkable, and the least known of those highland communities, is that which the Jews have formed upon the mountains lying to the north-east of Medina. That tract of country is called *Khiebar*; and the Jews inhabiting it are known in Arabia by the name of *Beni Khiebar*. They have independent Schicchs of their own, and are divided into three tribes; *Beni Missiad*, *Beni Schaban*, *Bent Anatssi*. So odious are they to the Mahometans, who accuse them of pillaging the caravans, that, in Syria, the greatest affront which can be offered a man is to call him *Beni Kheibar*. Those robberies seem, however, to be unjustly imputed to them. Some Mahometans, whom I could credit, assured me, that the Jews indeed furnished auxiliaries to the Arab army, which had lately pillaged the caravan from Damascus; but, that the authors of that enterprise were, the Schiech of the tribe of *Harb* in Hedjas, and he of the tribe of *Anaesse* in *Nejed*.

It does not appear that the Jews of Kheibar keep up any intercourse with their brethren who are dispersed over Asia. When I asked the Jews in Syria concerning them, they told me, that those false brethren durst not claim their fellowship, for that they did not observe the law. The Beni Kheibar must therefore be of the sect  
of

of the *Karaites*, who are not numerous, and are much dispersed; and, by the other Jews, who are in general attached to the sect of the Pharisees, are still more detested than the Christians or Mahometans.

The name of *Anaesse* is not unlike *Hanassi*, the name of a tribe of whom Benjamin de Tudela speaks as being his countrymen. It also has a considerable resemblance to *Baruc Anzab*, a race of Jews who gave much trouble to Mahomet and the first Caliphs. It should seem, therefore, that this branch of the Jews must have subsisted here for more than twelve centuries. *Barthema* was the first modern that made mention of this little state of independent Jews, in the neighbourhood of Medina.

The circumstances of this settlement have, perhaps, given rise to the fable of the *Sabbatical River*. These Jews cannot accompany a caravan, because their religion permits them not to travel on the Sabbath. Yet the country which they inhabit is surrounded by such vast and sandy deserts, that, unless with a caravan, so sequestered a tract cannot be safely either entered or left.

## SECTION XVIII.

## OF YEMEN IN GENERAL.

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CHAP. I.*Of the Boundaries and Subdivisions of Yemen.*

THIS great province, comprehending the finest and most fertile part of Arabia, is surrounded by the Arabic Gulph, and by the provinces of Hadramaut, Nejed, and Hedjas.

Yemen is naturally divided into two parts, differing greatly in soil and climate. That bordering on the Arabic Gulph is a dry and sandy plain, nearly two days journey in breadth, and is scorched by the most torrid heats. The other, extending immediately beyond this, is a high-lying country, full of precipitous, yet fertile hills, and enjoying a much more temperate air. But, these circumstances will fall properly within the natural history of Arabia; and I am here speaking only of its political divisions.

Yemen is, like the rest of Arabia, parcelled out among a number of different sovereigns in unequal portions. Some of them are princes of

con-

considerable power; but many are petty Schiechs, who are, however, perfectly independent.

The most considerable of those princes is the Imam, who resides at Sana. Having travelled through a part of his dominions, and by consequence acquired particular knowledge of them, I shall describe them in a separate article, and the rather, as they extend through the greater part of Yemen. At present, I proceed to give an abstract of what I could learn concerning the rest of this province.

The independent states of Yemen, beside the dominions of the Imam, are, as I learned from persons who were the most likely to be accurately informed,

1. The territory of *Aden*, which has been for some time governed by a particular prince;
2. The principality of *Kaukeban*, possessed by a *Sejid*;
3. *Kobail*, or *Hafchid-u-Bekil*, in which are many Schiechs, united in a sort of confederation;
4. The principality of *Abu-Arifch*, belonging to a Sheriffe;
5. A large district between *Abu-Arifch* and Hedjas, inhabited by free Bedouins;
6. The territory of *Khaukan*, under the dominion of its own Schiech;

7. The

7. The territory of *Saban*, comprehending the principality of *Saade*, which belongs to a *Sejid*, with the domains of some independent Schiechs;

8. *Nedssjeran*;

9. *Kachtan*;

10. *Nebhm*;

11. East *Khauan*, consisting of four small sovereignties, under the government of as many independent Schiechs;

12. The vast country of *Dsjof* or *Marcb*, governed by a Sherriffe, and some independent Schiechs;

13. The territory of *Jafa*, in which are at least three independent Schiechs.

There are possibly several other sovereign states in Yemen, which might be too small to come to my knowledge. A traveller, who should only stop a short time on his way, could not readily learn the names of all the petty German baronies. What I know certainly, however, as having witnessed striking enough instances of it, is, that those endless subdivisions of territory, among such a multitude of petty sovereigns, are, in a great measure, the cause of the state of decline in which Arabia at present appears: Such a collection of jarring interests is naturally fatal to trade and industry.



## CHAP. II.

*Of the Principality of Aden.*

THIS small state is bounded on the south by the Indian Ocean; on the west and north by the dominions of the Imam; and on the east by the country of *Jafu*. It formerly belonged to the Imam; but, in 1730, the inhabitants expelled the Imam's governor, and elected a Schiech, who is perfectly independent.

Aden, an ancient and celebrated city, gives its name to this principality. It has still a good harbour, although much declined from what it once was. Its trade is now trifling; for the Sovereign is never at peace with his neighbours. Coffee from Jafa is the only article for export which this city affords.

Among a number of cities, and a good many castles of no great strength, belonging to this small state, the only place that is still in any degree considerable, is *Labadsje*, the seat of the present Schiech *Abd ul Kerim el Foddeli*. This town was besieged by the famous *Abd Urrab*, from whom it suffered considerably. *Foddeli* is a narrow district, containing a city and several villages, known from its having been the original seat of the reigning family.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Principality of Kaukeban.*

THE country bearing this name, is furrounded almost on all hands by the dominions of the Imam of Sana; only, on one side, meeting the territory of the confederated Schiechs of Haschidu-Bekil. The reigning family are descendants from Mahomet, by *Hadi*, Imam of *Saude*. They, for several ages, possessed considerable dominions in Yemen; and retained the title of Imam even during the usurpation of the Turks. But, when this nation was driven out of Yemen by *Khasssem el Kebir*, that illustrious family were obliged to yield up their title of Imam to the new Arabian conqueror, and to content themselves with that of *Sidi* or *Sejid*. However, they still retain sovereign authority over a considerable territory.

A series of those sovereigns was communicated to me; but I could not find means to satisfy myself of its authenticity. The reigning prince, in 1763, was *Sejid Achmet*. He had several sons and brothers, and a good many nephews.

He resides at Kaukeban, a small unfortified town, but situate on the summit of an almost in-

accessible mountain. The aunt of the reigning prince has made a causeway be formed, by which loaded camels can now advance up to the city.

In the different districts into which this country is divided, are a good many towns and villages, most of which have castles or citadels upon adjoining hills. These are not unnecessary precautions for the defence of those petty princes, against so powerful a neighbour as the Imam of Sana.

*Wadi Laa* is a valley fertile in coffee, which belongs to *Sejid Ibrahim*, brother to the reigning Imam. In its neighbourhood are some hot mineral springs.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the allied Princes of Haschid-u-Bekil.*

THE extensive country of Haschid-u-Bekil, possessed by a number of confederated Schiechs, is properly named *Bellad el Kobail*, the Country of the Highlanders: But the other, expressive of the confederacy, is the name by which it is more commonly known. It extends northward as far as to the Desert of *Amasia*; on the south and the east, it is bounded by the dominions of the Imam, and the principality of Kaukeban; westward, it meets the sovereign state of Abu Arifsch.

wifch. The republican fpirit prevails fo little through Afia, that thefe flates may be regarded as a fingular political phenomenon in the eaft.

This highland country contains many Schiechs, defcended from very ancient noble families, each of whom rules within his own domains as a fovereign prince. Thefe Schiechs, finding themfelves unable to make feparately any fuccefsful refiftance to a powerful neighbour, have combined, in order to defend themfelves by the common force.

It is not eafy, even in Europe, to obtain a thorough knowledge of the principles of any political conftitution; but, among the miftruftful, fufpicious inhabitants of the eaft, fuch a thing is almoft impoffible. I could not learn upon what laws and conditions the confederation of Hafcid-u-Bekil is maintained. All I know is, that they choofe a certain number of chiefs, and, in war, fo many generals, to command their united forces.

Thefe allied princes, and their fubjects, are much better foldiers, and more inclined to war, than the reft of the Arabians. The Imam of Sana, and the Sherriffe of Mecca, entertain each feveral regiments of thofe highlanders, and pay them better than their other troops. They muft have officers of their own nation; and the Schiechs ufually both raife the regiments, and  
nominate

nominate the officers. For this reason, the Imam fears to quarrel with the confederates. When they go to war with the Sovereign of Sana, their countrymen in his service desert and join them.

A tradition which subsists concerning their common origin, may have been the cause which first gave rise to the confederation among those Schiechs, and which has disposed them to maintain it hitherto. Haschid and Bekil, whose names the confederates have assumed, were, by this tradition, brothers, sons of one *Babroscham*, by a princess called *Nedsjema*. Babroscham, who was born of honourable parents in Natolia, after some romantic adventures, carried off that princess, who was daughter to the king of Bithynia, and sought refuge upon these mountains of Yemen; where, through his sons, Haschid and Bekil, he became the ancestor of all the Schiechs of *Bellad el Kobail*; and they accordingly look all up to him as their common parent.

It is certain, however, that in this country are Schiechs, whose families can be traced farther back than the date of this tale. In the district of *Kbeivan*, and in the city of *Beit il Toba*, resides the chief of the family of *Toba*, a descendant from the ancient Arabian monarchs of this name,

I was told of fifty of these independent Schiechs, some of whom possess domains in the midst of the Imam's territories. It is needless to put down their names.

The country inhabited by these confederates is of various degrees of fertility. Some vallies, which produce fruits in great abundance, are interspersed among the hills; and even the higher grounds are cultivated and fertile.

A number of castles are scattered upon the heights; but few considerable villages are to be seen. The town of Kheivan, in the district of the same name, is remarkable for having been the seat, first of the Hamjaric Monarchs, and afterwards of the Imams. Ruins of a very ancient palace are still to be seen there.

In some other small villages are several monuments, from which it appears, that, before the Turkish conquest, a great part of *Bellad el Kobail* was under the dominion of the ancient Imams.

## CHAP. V.

*Of the Principality of Abu Arifsch, and the neighbouring Bedouins.*

THE principality of Abu Arifsch, which is also named after its capital, is properly a part of Tehama.

hama. It stretches along the Arabic Gulphi, northward from Loheya, for the space of two degrees. Like the rest of the Tehama, it is every where dry and barren, except only where watered by the rivers from the mountainous parts of Yemen.

This country was, not long since, within the Imam's dominions. The Sovereigns of Sana usually intrust the government of their provinces to none but persons of mean birth; often to slaves, who may be less likely than the Arab nobles to aspire at independence. But a late Imam imprudently appointed a Sherriffe, named Achmed, to the government of Abu Arifsch. The consequence was, that this Sherriffe revolted against his Sovereign: Thus justifying the saying among the Arabs, that the posterity of Mahomet have all a thirst for sovereign power.

His son Mahommed, the reigning Sherriffe of Abu Arifsch, has hitherto withstood all the efforts of the Imam to reduce him to his obedience. The confederates of Haschid-u-Bekil have been repeatedly excited, by presents from the Imam, to attack the Sherriffe; but their attacks have been made without any regular concerted plan of conquest. Schiech *Mecrami* of Nedsjeran likewise penetrated into this country, with a small army, in two successive winters. To expel this enemy, the Sherriffe levied six hundred  
men

men in the country of Hafchid-u-Bekil, and gave him battle in January 1763. The Sheriffe was defeated, with the loss of six or seven men, upon which he shut himself up, in despair, in his palace. But Schiech Mecrami did not avail himself of his victory; for, learning that the Schiech of Kachtan had entered Nedsjeran in his absence, he hastened home to the defence of his own dominions.

The remarkable places in the principality of Abu Arifsch, are the capital, known by the same name, which is encompassed with walls, and is the seat of the Sheriffe; and the town and harbour of *Gezan*, a day's journey from Abu Arifsch. This province of *Gezan*, situate upon the Arabic Gulph, and in a fertile country, carries on a considerable trade in senna; great plenty of which grows in the circumjacent territory; and in coffee, which is brought hither from the mountains of Hafchid-u-Bekil. It has a trade likewise with the ports on the opposite side of the Arabic Gulph; but has no intercourse with the subjects of the Imam. A few towns, and several large villages, form the rest of this principality.

The plain extended along the Arabic Gulph, for the space of a degree, from the borders of Abu Arifsch to Hedjas, is occupied by a tribe of free Arabs, called *Beni Halal*. These Bedouins  
live



live in tents, under the government of Schiechs. They are poor, and addicted to robbery, as I have already observed in the account of our journey from Jidda to Loheya. But they value themselves on their courage, and glory in bearing pain without shrinking.

These Bedouins, when asked what religion they are of, call themselves Mussulmans. But their neighbours, not crediting this account, call them infidels, and accuse them of professing a peculiar religion, the followers of which are called *Masaliks*. It appears indeed, that they depart widely, in several points, from pure Mahometism; their circumcision at least is totally different. It may be thought, that these wandering Arabs, having never been subdued, by either Mahomet or his successors, have retained some part of their ancient religion. The Mussulmans consider the Bedouins, in general, as scarcely orthodox, and reproach them as not being true believers.

These Arabs of Beni Halal inhabit a barren territory. They are poor, and live upon the scanty produce of their flocks.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the Territories of Saham and Khaulan.*

THE Arabs call the mountainous tract between Hafchid-u-Bekil and Hedjas, Sahan. This tract of country is of considerable extent, and produces abundance of excellent fruits of all kinds, but especially grapes. Iron mines have also been discovered in it, but for want of wood have not been wrought. From this circumstance, the iron in Yemen is both dear and bad.

The inhabitants of this country, especially the highlanders, who have little intercourse with strangers, are said to speak the best Arabic, corresponding more entirely than that spoken any where else with the language of the Alcoran; although, at the same time, they are almost absolutely strangers to the book.

These people differ essentially in their manners from the Arabs in the cities of Yemen. They seldom take more than one wife each. Their women are not permitted to marry till they have completed their fifteenth year; whereas, in the dominions of the Imam, girls are married at the age of nine or ten. They live upon meat, honey, milk, and some vegetables. Their country affords plenty of these articles. By

this simple mode of living, they commonly attain to a very advanced age, retaining the perfect use of their sight to the last. They are very hospitable, and yet rob with no less rapacity, when they meet with travellers not embodied in a caravan, than the Bedouins of the desert.

In this country are many independent lordships. The principal of these is *Saade*, in the possession of Prince *Khaffem*, a descendant from Imam *Hadi*, of the same stock as the present royal families of Kaukeban and Sana. This Prince takes also the title of Imam; but his principality is so small, that he can hardly defend himself against the Schiechs of the neighbouring mountains.

At Saade, his capital, and the place of his residence, is a custom-house, which brings him a considerable revenue. All goods from the dominions of the Imam must pass this way to Nedjeran, Kachtan, or Mecca; and high duties are exacted. In the neighbourhood of this city is a high hill, famous as being the post upon which a prince of this state sustained a seven years siege by the Turks.

A part of the great desert of Amasia lies between Saade and Hafchid-u-Bekil. In the middle of that desert is *Birket Soidan*, the only place where travellers can halt for refreshment.

The

The small district of Khaulan, which comes to be here taken notice of, and which is to be carefully distinguished from that of the same name near Sana, lies among the mountains westward from Saade, upon the road from Sana to Mecca, four days journey from Hali, the extreme city upon that side of the Sherriffe's territory. It has likewise an independent Schiech. This is all that I could learn concerning it.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the Principalities of Nedsjeran and Cautaw.*

NEDSJERAN is situate in a pleasant and well watered country, three days journey north-east from Saade. This narrow territory is fertile in corn and fruits, especially in dates. It affords excellent pasturage; and its horses and camels are in high request through all Arabia.

Its present Schiech, whose name is Mecrami, has gained a very high reputation. He is said not to be of the stock of the ancient nobility. In his youth, he travelled through all Arabia, Persia, and India. After his return, the Imam of Saade intrusted him with the government of the province of Nedsjeran. But, scarce had Mecrami been invested in this office, when he threw off his allegiance.

The

The new Schiech of Nedsjeran has made himself formidable by his genius and valour, not merely to his neighbours, but even to distant princes. Not long since, he introduced his troops, by small detachments, into the territory of Hafchid-u-Bekil; penetrated into the dominions of the Imam; and made himself master of the province of *Safan*. In January 1763, as has already been mentioned, he defeated the Sheriffe of Abu Arifch. In the end of the same year, he had traversed all Arabia with his army, and entered the province of *Lachfa*. In Europe, it would be impossible to conduct an army, in so short a time, through such an extent of strange and desert countries. But an army of Arabs are not incumbered with artillery, tents, or ammunition. The scanty provisions which they need are borne by camels; and the foldiers, being light-armed, and almost naked, fear no fatigue.

Schiech Mecrami enjoys through Arabia the reputation, no less of a profound theologian, than of a valiant warrior. His religious opinions differ essentially from those of the standing sects among the Mussulmans. He honours Mahomet as the Prophet of God, but looks with little respect on his successors and commentators. Some of the more sensible Arabs say, that this Schiech has found means to avail himself of heaven, even in this life; for, to use their expression,

sion,

tion, he sells paradise by the yard; and assigns more or less honourable places in that mansion according to the sums paid him. Simple, superstitious persons actually purchase assignments upon heaven, from him and his procurators, and hope to profit by them. A Persian, of the province of *Kirman* too, has lately begun to issue similar bills upon heaven, and has gained considerably by the traffic. The people of the East appear to approach daily nearer to the ingenious invention of the Europeans in these matters.

The knowledge of many secrets, and, among others, of one for obtaining rain when he pleases, is likewise ascribed to this Schiech. When the country suffers by drought, he appoints a fast, and after it a public procession, in which all must assist, with an air of humility, without their turbans, and in a garb suitably mean. Some Arabs of distinction assured me, that this never fails to procure an immediate fall of rain.

The capital of this small kingdom is Nedsjeran, an ancient city, famous in Arabian history. The other towns in it are places of little consequence.

The small district of Kachtan lies among the mountains, three days journey northward from Nedsjeran. At Loheya, I saw a person of distinction

tinction from that country, who had been at Sana with horses for the Imam. He became suspicious of my intentions, when I put some questions to him respecting his country, and would give me no information. All that I could learn concerning Kachtan, was, that it is governed by a peculiar Schiech.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the Principalities of Nehhm and Khaulan.*

*NEHHM* is a small district between Dsjof and Haschid-u-Bekil. The present Schiech, who is of a warlike character, and often troublesome to the Imam, is an independent prince. He possesses a few small inconsiderable towns, with a fertile mountain, on which are many villages. The inhabitants of *Deiban* are free; but they always join the Schiech of Nehhm in his wars with the Imam.

The small district of Khaulan, which is different from that of the same name of which some account has already been given, lies a few leagues south-east from Sana. It is governed by an independent Schiech, the representative of a very ancient family. Schiech *Rajech Khaulani*, who reigned in 1763, dwelled at Sana, being general of the Imam's troops. His ordinary  
place

place of residence is at *Beit Rodsjc*, a small town in his own dominions.

In this principality is the small city of *Tanacim*, famous among the Jews of Arabia, who had anciently their chief seat, with many spacious synagogues, in it. At present it is almost desolate; and few Jews are among its inhabitants. *Beit el Kibsi* is a village inhabited solely by Sherriffes, one of whom must always be at the head of the caravan which goes annually from Sana to Mecca. This caravan consists of about three thousand persons, and is forty-five days upon the road, although the whole length of the journey be not more than an hundred German miles, at least if it could be travelled in a straight line.

Several places, which once pertained to the prince of Khaulan, have been, by degrees, annexed to the dominions of the Imam.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the Country of Dsjof.*

THIS great province of Yemen extends southward from Nedsjeran to Hadramaut, and eastward from Hafschid-u-Bekil to the Defart, by which Yemen is separated from Oman. It is full of sandy and desert plains. In several places,



ces, however, the inhabitants want neither cheese, nor durra, nor any other of the necessities of life. The horses and camels of Dsjof are greatly in request in the Imam's dominions.

The country of Dsjof is divided into *Bellad el Bedoui*, that district which is occupied by wandering Arabs; *Bellad es Saladin*, the highland district, governed by independent chiefs, who take the title of *Sultan*; and *Bellad es Scheraf*, the district in which the supreme power is possessed by Sherreffes.

The wandering Arabs in this country are of a martial character. In their military expeditions they ride upon horses or camels. Their arms are a lance, a sabre, and sometimes a match-firelock. Sometimes they put on coats of mail, a piece of defensive armour which the other Arabs have ceased to wear. They are not a little troublesome to their neighbours, who are settled in villages,---plundering them, and often carrying off their young women. But neither these, nor any other of the Bedouins, are ferociously cruel; they only rob strangers, but never kill them. These Bedouins of Dsjof are said to have uncommon talents for poetry, and to excel all the other Arabs in this elegant art.

In the district of *Bellad es Saladin* are many petty sovereigns. Of these, none was named to

me but the Sultan of *Baham*. The title of Sultan is no where used in Arabia, except in Dsjof and Jafa. It seems to be applied to distinguish the Schiechs of the Highlanders from those of the Bedouins.

The most considerable princes in the district of Bellad es Scheraf, are the three Sherriifes of *Mareb*, *Harib*, and *Rachvan*. But the first, although chief of the descendants of Mahomet in this country, possesses only the town of Mareb, with some adjacent villages.

Mareb, though consisting only of about three hundred poor houses, is the capital of the province. It is situate sixteen leagues north-east from Sana. It was known to the ancients as the capital of the Sabeans, by the name of *Mariaba*. It is not certain whether it was ever called *Saba*. In its neighbourhood are some ruins, which are pretended to be the remains of the palace of Queen *Balkis*. But there is no inscription to confirm or refute this assertion.

The Sabeans had a reservoir or basin for water, which was anciently famous, and which I often heard talked of in Arabia; but nobody could give me an exact description of it, except one man of rank, who had been born at Mareb, and had always lived there. He told me, that the famous reservoir, called by the Arabs *Sitte Mareb*, was a narrow valley between two ranges of

hills, and a day's journey in length. Six or seven small rivers meet in that valley, holding their course south and south-west, and advancing from the territories of the Imam. Some of these rivers contain fishes, and their waters flow through the whole year; others are dry, except in the rainy season. The two ranges of hills which confine this valley, approach so near to each other upon the eastern end, that the intermediate space may be crossed in five or six minutes. To confine the waters in the rainy season, the entrance into the valley was here shut up by a high and thick wall; and, as outlets, through which the water thus collected, might be conveyed, in the season of drought, to water the neighbouring fields,---three large flood-gates were formed in the wall, one above another. The wall was fifty feet high, and built of large hewn stones. Its ruins are still to be seen. But the waters, which it used formerly to confine, are now lost among the sands, after running only a short way.

Thus was there nothing incredibly wonderful in the true account of the Sabæan reservoir. Similar, although much smaller reservoirs, are formed at the roots of the mountains in many places through Yemen. Near Constantinople is a vale, the entrance into which is likewise shut up by a wall to confine the water, which is conveyed

veyed thence in aqueducts into the capital of the Ottoman empire.

The tradition, that the city of Mareb was destroyed by a deluge, occasioned by the sudden bursting of the wall, has entirely the air of a popular fable. It seems more probable, that the wall, being neglected, fell gradually into disrepair, when the kingdom of the Sabæans declined. But the ruin of the wall proved fatal to the city in a different way. The neighbouring fields, when no longer watered from the reservoir, became waste and barren; and the city was thus left without means of subsistence. Besides, Mareb is not so situate that it could suffer an inundation in consequence of the demolition of the wall. It stands upon a small eminence, at a league's distance from it, upon the water side.

The fertility of the district might be renewed by the reparation of this work. But, such undertakings can be executed only by opulent sovereigns. *Mariaba* was the seat of a powerful prince, who reigned over Yemen and Hadramaut. *Mareb* is but the abode of a poor Sheriffe, who can scarcely withstand the encroachments of feeble neighbours.

The only other place in the country of Dsjoï, that I heard of as remarkable, is *Kasser el Nat*,

a citadel which stands upon a lofty hill, and was built by the Hamjare princes.

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the Country of Jafa.*

THIS territory is surrounded by Aden, some part of the Imam's dominions, and the extensive province of Hadramaut. It is fertile, and abounds particularly in coffee and cattle.

It was formerly under the dominion of the Imam; but, in the end of the last century, the inhabitants revolted, and made themselves independent. They are governed at present by three sovereign princes, who have conquered also a part of the province of Hadramaut. Those princes are, 1. The Sultan of *Resses*, who resides at *Medsjeba*; 2. The Sultan of *Mofaka*, who takes his title from the place of his residence; 3. The Sultan of *Kara*, who resides in a castle upon the mountain of Kara.

One of these Sultans of Jafa likewise possesses *Schæbhr*, a sea-port town, from which incense, but inferior in quality to that of India, is exported. Nobody could inform me concerning the interior parts of this district of *Schæbhr*.

*Bellad Schafel*, and *Ed Dabla*, are the dominions of two petty Schiechs. *Medina el Asfal*,

is a city famous for the tombs of various saints. The inhabitants are consequently Sunnites.

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## SECTION XIX.

OF THE DOMINIONS OF THE IMAM OF SANA

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### CHAP. 1.

*Of the Extent and Divisions of the Imam's Dominions.*

SPEAKING of Yemen in general, I unavoidably gave some account of that part of this province which is subject to the Imam. The same intermixture of fertile and barren territory, and the same productions, appear every where through the whole province. The Imam, however, seems to be master of the richest, the most agreeable, and the most interesting part of this tract of country.

It would not be easy to explain distinctly the extent and limits of this sovereign's territories, as they are so intersected by the domains of a number of petty princes. On the north side, they

they meet the territory of Hafchid-u-Bekil; westward they are bounded by the principality of Abu-Arifch and the Arabic Gulph; to the south by the principality of Aden; and on the east by the territories of Dsjof and Jafa.

The general division of Yemen into *Tchama*, the Lowlands, and *Djebal*, the Highlands, obtains in the Imam's dominions, as well as elsewhere. Upon this grand division depends the subdivision of the kingdom of Sana into thirty governments or counties. Tehama contains six of these governments, and the highland country twenty-four.

These small governments are not all alike populous or remarkable. It would be a tedious and superfluous labour, therefore, to enumerate the names of all the towns and villages contained in them. I shall content myself with taking notice of the principal of those, after I have given some general account of the Sovereign of these dominions, and of the nature of his government.

As there are, in the territory of the Imam, many Schiechs dispersed among the mountains, who acknowledge not his authority, and are but in a very slight degree dependent upon him, I shall be more careful to take notice of these independent Lords, than of the petty towns and villages. The reader will be more entertained by an account of the

the

the political constitution under which this singular people are united, than he could possibly be by a list of Arabic names.

## CHAP. II.

### *Origin and History of the Imams.*

IN the abstract of the revolutions of Arabia, I have briefly mentioned that by which the expulsion of the Turks was accomplished. This event took place in 1630; and, from this period, are we to date the elevation of the present royal family of Sana. Their great ancestor is *Khasssem Abu Mahomed*, who was the chief author of that revolution.

Khasssem was descended from Mahomet by Imam *Hadi*, who is buried at Saade, where his posterity still reign. From him are sprung both the Imams of Saade, and the princes of Kaukeban, whom the Turks could never subdue. Khasssem lived as a private person, upon the revenue of an estate which had been left him by his ancestors, upon the mountain of *Schachara*, northeast from Loheya. Although but a private individual, he enjoyed the friendship of the independent Schiechs in the Highlands; and, seeing the Turks to be odious to his countrymen, he, with the aid of those Schiechs, attacked the Pachas, and,



and, by degrees, expelled them out of all the cities of Yemen. Thus attaining the dignity of a Sovereign Prince, and assuming the title of Sejid Khasssem, he still continued, however, to reside upon the mountains of Schaehara, and died there, after a reign of nine years. The gratitude of the nation honoured him with the epithet *Great*; and he has accordingly been denominated *Khasssem el Kbir*, or Khasssem the Great.

After this revolution, the ancient royal family of Kaukeban, being obliged to yield its prerogatives to the family of Khasssem, the eldest son of Khasssem assumed the title of *Imam*, and the name of *Metwokkel Allah*. The Imam is properly the clergyman who says public prayers in the mosques. The royal successors of Mahomet have continued the practice of performing these religious services, in proof that they enjoy spiritual, no less than temporal power. Various Arabian Princes, who dare not assume the title of Caliph, content themselves with that of Imam, or *Emir el Mumcnim*, Prince of the Faithful. All those Sovereigns, thus invested with spiritual authority, whether Caliphs or Imams, observe the ancient custom of changing their name, like the Popes in Christendom, when they mount the throne. This change seems to indicate, that the whole character of the man is entirely altered,

upon

upon his being invested with an employment, which impresses a degree of sanctity upon the character.

Imam Metwokkel Allah proceeded to deliver his country from the Turks, who do not appear to have made any very vigorous efforts to maintain themselves in so remote a conquest, by which they were rather losers than gainers. The Arabs honour that Imam as a saint: To spare the public revenue, he, like many other Mahometan Monarchs, earned his livelihood by his labour, employing himself in making caps. He had only one wife, and she contented herself with one household servant. Metwokkel Allah resided at *Doran*, and reigned thirty years.

His son *Mejid Billah* succeeded him; was no less scrupulous than his father with respect to the revenues of the state; and reigned seven years.

His successor was his cousin *Mahadi Achmet*, who, after reigning likewise seven years, and, notwithstanding his devout turn of mind, extending by his conquests the limits of the kingdom, was succeeded by

His nephew *Mejid Billah*. He was proclaimed Imam by the name of *Mahadi Hadi*. This prince had reigned only two years, when *Mahadi Mahomed*, son of Imam Mahadi Achmet, dethroned him, and assumed his place.

This Imam Mahadi Mahomed resided at *Mou-ahbeb*, and reigned thirty years. The French visited his court in 1707: An account of the circumstances of which visit has been published by *La Roque*. *Hamilton* speaks also of this prince, and says, that he was eighty years of age in the year 1714. Mahadi Mahomed was continually at war with the confederates of Haschid-u-Bekil. In the beginning of this contest, he put his nephew Khasssem at the head of his army, and he proved victorious; but the Imam ungratefully shut up the successful general in the citadel of Damar. At a subsequent period, the Imam's son being defeated by the confederates, that prince was obliged to release Khasssem, and intrust him again with the command of his forces. Khasssem was again victorious; but, before he could return to his uncle's court, another person, of the same family, from Schæhhara, had possessed himself of the throne, assuming the name of *El Nasr*. However, the usurper had scarcely enjoyed the supreme power two years, when Khasssem expelled him, and ascended the throne under the name of *El Metwokkel*.

Imam *El Metwokkel* chose Sana for the place of his residence, and there reigned in tranquillity for ten years.

After his death, *El Mansor* his son ascended the throne. But, hardly was he seated upon it, when

when a nephew of Mahadi Mahomed, with the assistance of the prince of Kaukeban, made himself master of all the country except Sana. El Manfor, however, found means to seize the persons of the usurper and his protector, and cast them both into confinement. He, with the same good fortune, repressed the rebellion of another of his cousins, and of one of his brothers; and shut these also up for the rest of life. He reigned one and twenty years.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of El Mahadi, the reigning Imam.*

IMAM EL MANSOR left several sons, the eldest of whom, *Ali*, had naturally the best right to succeed him. His mother was the first wife that his father had married, and daughter to the prince of Kaukeban: Consequently he was lineally descended from Mahomet both by father and mother. But, the princess, who was living at Sana in 1763, had not influence or address enough to secure the succession to her son, although it was the general wish of the country that he should be sovereign.

A son, who was named Abbas, had been born to El Manfor by a negro's slave. This woman artfully concealed her master's death, till the *Ka-*  
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*di Jechje*, one of El Manfor's principal ministers, had time to secure the troops, and the governors of the provinces, in the interest of her son Abbas, whom she then made to be proclaimed Imam, by the name of El Mahadi. Prince Ali was thrown into confinement, in which he died in the year 1759.

In the beginning of El Mahadi's reign, the prince of Kaukeban repeatedly disputed with him the title of Imam. But, being twice defeated, and his beard being burnt in the second engagement by the accidental explosion of his magazine of powder, he renounced his pretensions to the character of Imam, and made peace with the Monarch of Sana.

In the year 1750, an army of three thousand Arabs from Nehhan and Deiban advanced nearly to Sana: But they were routed and dispersed by the Imam. Seven years after, the confederates of Hafehid-u-Bekil attacked the Imam, and routed his forces. But, in the year following, 1758, the Imam's general surprised and routed the allies.

Imam El Mahadi Abbas was five and forty years of age, and had reigned seventeen years, in 1763. He was of a dark complexion, like his ancestors by the mother's side, and did not at all resemble the other descendants of Mahomet. Had it not been for some negro traits, his countenance

tenance might have been thought a good one. He had twenty brothers, of whom seven that I saw were black as ebony, flat-nosed, and thick-lipped, like the Caffres of the South of Africa. He had married the daughter of a relation, one of the pretenders to the crown of *Tuiss*; and, beside her, several other free women; but he kept fewer female slaves than his father had. *El Mansor* had more than two hundred of these in his haram.

The reigning Imam had a number of sons; but only four of them were so much grown up as to be permitted to appear in public. His relations, who are numerous, live all at *Sana*; and some of them are very well provided for. He has several uncles; but he leaves all his relations in private stations, employing none of them in any public office.

On his accession to the throne, he degraded *Kadi Jachja*, to whom he owed his advancement, for some time in the post of Prime Minister. But, finding that his subjects were discontented with the administration of *Jachja*, and still regretted *Ali*, who, before his death, had written an affecting letter to his brother; the Imam sacrificed his minister to the public hatred, deposing him, confiscating his effects, and throwing himself and his confidential servant into prison. The degraded minister was restored to liberty soon

foon after our arrival at Sana. But, instead of restoring his effects, the Imam only allowed him a small pension, which was scarcely enough to make him live.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *History of Schiech Abd Urrab.*

OF the enemies with whom Imam El Mahadi had to contend, the most formidable, both by genius and courage, was Schiech Abd Urrab of *Hodsjerie*. When speaking of the siege of *Taaes*, I mentioned by the way something of the adventures of this Schiech, who is regarded as a hero among his countrymen. I found his history interesting, and shall now enter into it more at length, because it involves several particulars illustrative of the principles of the Imam's government, and of the general manners of the Arabs.

Abd Urrab, son to a *Nakib* or General, who was governor of a small province, succeeded his father in the government. The Imam, pleased with his services, conferred on him the government of *Kataba*, which was more considerable; and at the same time intrusted him with a commission to demolish the castles of some neighbouring lords. The zeal with which he carried  
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this order into execution, raised in many enemies among the nobility: one of the bitter of whom was a Nakib, of an ancient family of *Wadei*, who, among others, beset his castle.

This Nakib prepossessed the Imam against Abd Urrab, by accusing him of rebellion; and obtained three thousand men to reduce him to obedience. With this army, he besieged the pretended rebel for eleven months in Kataba, the capital of the district under his government. When Abd Urrab could no longer hold out, he sallied forth with six hundred men, made his way through the midst of the enemy, and retired to the district of Hodsjerie, where his friends opened to him the gates of their fortresses, and acknowledged him their Schiech. Another army, sent by the Imam to besiege him here, was as unsuccessful as the first.

As yet, the new Schiech had only stood upon the defensive; but, beginning now to feel his strength, he attacked the dominions of the Imam, made himself master of various places, and levied heavy contributions. The Imam, unable to reduce him to obedience, entered into an alliance against him with the prince of *Aden*. Abd Urrab upon this entered Aden, besieged the sovereign in his capital, and forced a large sum of money from him. The I-

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Imam on this occasion entirely abandoned his city.

In the account of the siege of *Taaes*, I have already related in what manner the Imam concluded a peace with the Schiech, and how the latter took that city. The conditions, I may here add, were, that the Imam should treat the Schiech as a friend, acknowledge him Shiech of Hodsjerie, and renounce all his own pretensions to the sovereignty of that province. This engagement the Imam not only confirmed with seven oaths; but, according to a prevalent custom in the East, sent to the Schiech the copy of the Koran upon which he had sworn, and the rosary which he used at prayers, as pledges of his sincerity. Moreover, his two generals, *El Mas*, and *Achmed el Hamer*, also bound themselves that the Imam should abide by his promise.

Trusting to so many oaths, to those pledges of faith, and to the assurances of the two generals, *Abd Urrab* yielded to the pressing invitations of the Imam, and repaired to his court. By the way he was treated with the highest marks of respect. The inhabitants of Sana went out to meet, and gaze upon him, as a hero. His valour, his address, his noble exploits, were generally talked of with passionate admiration.

It is not known whether the Imam had any previous intention of destroying him, or became jealous

jealous of those praises, and began to fear that a party might be formed, even in his own capital, in behalf of the rebel. However it might be, the Schiech, soon after his arrival, was seized, bedaubed on the face and hands with red paint, and, in this condition, placed on a camel, with his face to the tail, and conducted through the streets. His sister, who was at this time in Sana, seeing her brother thus maltreated, sprang from the roof of a house, and fell dead at his feet. After being led about in this plight, and still farther abused with blows, the Schiech was thrown upon a dunghill, and, at the end of three days, beheaded.

This perfidious act of the Imam moved the indignation of his subjects. The two generals, who had pledged themselves for the safety of Abd Urrab, were particularly enraged. The first, Nakib *El Mas*, was commander of the national troops; the other, Nakib *Achmed El Hamer*, commanded the mercenaries from Hafchid-u-bekil, and his brother Khassem was general of the confederates. These two considerate persons thought that it became them to shew their resentment.

El Hamer, therefore, reproached the Imam for his perfidious cruelty, but was immediately cast into prison. El Mas, now more enraged than ever, formed a party to dethrone the Imam;

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but the prince preventing him, made coffee to be given him, upon a friendly visit; by the effects of which the Nakib died before he could leave the palace.

As soon as Khaffem received notice of the imprisonment of his brother El Hamer, he attacked the Imam's dominions with the forces of the confederates; but happening to lose his son in a skirmish, he retreated home. The Imam, fearing new movements on the part of the allies of Hafschid-u-bekil, set Nakib El Hamer at liberty, by beheading him in prison. Since that time, the allies have never ceased avenging his death, by inroads upon the dominions of the Imam; in which they burnt several cities, soon after our arrival in Arabia.

The conduct of the Imam, in respect to this unfortunate Schiech of Hodsjerie, has rendered him odious to his neighbours and subjects, and may probably occasion his deposition from the throne, and premature death

## CHAP. V.

*Of the Constitution and Government of the Dominions of Sana.*

THE throne of Yemen is hereditary. If generally approved of by the subjects, the eldest legitimate son of an Imam is his rightful successor.

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But, the revolutions which I have briefly narrated, shew, that this order of succession is often violated. In the despotic governments of the East, indeed, no order can be closely observed, because there are no fundamental laws. The practice of polygamy has also a tendency to confound the order of succession in Asia, as it often happens, that brothers, by different mothers, found their pretensions to succeed their father upon grounds equally false, or equally specious. The blind preference of a father, sunk into dotage, or the intrigues of a favourite, in such cases, determine the difference.

The Imam is an absolute prince, and the more fit for uniting in his own person supreme authority, both spiritual and temporal, over his subjects. His jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters, however, extends not over the dominions of other sovereigns of the same sect. These states have each a Musti or Cadi for its spiritual use.

Although the Imam be absolute, he is checked in the exercise of his authority by the supreme tribunal of Sana, of which he is only president. This tribunal, consisting of a certain number of Kadis, possesses the sole power of life and death. The Imam may not order any of his subjects for execution, but such as have been condemned in consequence of a criminal prosecution before this Court. The Kadis are generally esteemed

to be persons of incorruptible integrity, of blameless lives, and devoted to the faithful discharge of their duties. They are not changed here so often as in Turkey, but hold their offices usually for life.

Yet, when one of these Monarchs is disposed to abuse his authority, he can break through any restraints imposed upon him by this tribunal. The assessors are nominated by the Imam, and removable at his pleasure. He has it thus in his power to extort their suffrages by threatening them with disgrace. But, the sovereigns of Sana have never found their advantage in having recourse to violent measures. Acts of tyranny have commonly ended in the deposition of the Prince who hazarded them. This fate seems to await the present Imam, whose cruelty and extortion have nearly wearied out the patience of his subjects.

At the Imam's court, public offices are many, and titles of honour few. The first Minister has no other title but *Fakih* ; an appellation so vague, that his secretaries, and men of learning who think themselves in any degree above the vulgar, assume it as well as the Minister. The other Ministers, the Secretary of State, the Superintendent of pious establishments, the Surveyor-general of public buildings, the Inspector of the camels, and, by consequence, all those who occupy the first em-

employments, are, in the same manner, only Fakih's, without any other title of honour to distinguish them.

Every petty district in the dominions of the Imam has its governor. If not a Prince, or one of the higher nobility, this governor is called *Wali* and *Dola*; or sometimes Emir, when he happens to be a person of low birth. I have already remarked, that the Sovereigns of Sana find it generally the best policy to confer those governments upon men who have risen merely by personal merit, rather than upon their nobles.

A Dola in Yemen is much such a another as a Pacha in Turkey, only acting upon a narrower stage. He commands the forces stationed in in his province, regulates the police, and collects the taxes. From lucrative governments, the Dolas are recalled every two or three years, to prevent their accumulating too much wealth. When the Imam continues a Dola in his office, he sends him a horse, a sabre, and robes. All are obliged to render an account, from time to time, of their administration; and, when guilty of high misdemeanors, or convicted of malversations in office, they are punished by imprisonment, or by confiscation of their property, but seldom capitally. Sometimes a Dola, who has been thus disgraced, is raised from prison to an office

office of greater consequence than that of which he was divested. This custom marks the character of despotism, where honour, and degradation by punishment, of consequence, are utterly unknown.

In every little town, a Sub-dola, with a small garrison, consisting sometimes of only five or six soldiers, reside, to maintain order. The chief of a large village is a *Schieh*; he of a small one, a *Hakim*.

The Dolas of considerable governments are attended by a *Baskateb* or comptroller, whose business is to keep a strict eye upon their conduct, and to inform the Imam of what is going forward. This spy often succeeds the Governor who has been removed upon his representation; but another *Baskateb* is, at the same time, sent to do for him what he did for his predecessor.

Every city in which a Dola resides has also a Kadi, dependent on the chief Kadi of Sana. The Kadi is sole judge in civil and ecclesiastical affairs; nor may the Dola interfere to contradict his sentences, or render them inefficacious. The Kadis in the provinces, no less than in the capital, are in high reputation for wisdom and integrity.

In the sea-port towns, the *Emir Babrr*, who is inspector of the port, enjoys the chief authority under the Dola. In other towns, the chief Magistrate

strate is denominated *Schicb el Belled*. He it is who levies the taxes, and determines what each individual must pay. The *Emir es Souk*, regulates sales and markets. In Yemen the post of keeper of the prison is honourable, and an object of ambition.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the Revenues of the Imam.*

IT is no doubt difficult for a traveller to gain any tolerably accurate knowledge of the public revenue of a state in which he spends only a short time. In Arabia it is peculiarly difficult; as he must here be very cautious in putting questions, that he may not render himself suspected among a nation of whom so few have any knowledge of public affairs.

I however had the advantage of consulting upon this head a man who had held employments, in which he could not avoid making himself acquainted with the state of the Imam's finances. This person was *Oraki* the Jew, surveyor-general of the buildings, who had been the favourite of two successive Imams, and of whose adventures I have given some account in the narrative of our journey to Sana.

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By this Jew's calculation, the revenues of Imam El Mahadi Mahomet amounted to 830,000 crowns in the month. But the reigning family having lost a number of provinces, *Kataba*, *Aden*, *Abu Arifsch*, and *Tuæs*, with part of *Bel-lad Ancs* and *Harras*, and having bestowed the districts of *Ofab* and *Mechader* in fief, El Mansor's monthly income was thus reduced to 300,000 crowns. The present Imam had recovered some of the dismembered territories, and had acquired others which had never before belonged to the empire. His revenue might therefore be nearly 500,000 crowns a-month.

But from this I cannot make an estimate of the Imam's wealth; for Oræki the Jew could give me no information concerning his expenditure. In the provinces, I was told, every Dola pays the troops belonging to his government; defrays the charges of the police; and, after deducting all that the public expences require, remits the surplus to the Imam.

This revenue arises from a land and a poll tax of long standing, and from duties payable upon articles of merchandise. Coffee affords a very considerable tax. Before it can be put a-board a ship for exportation, the Imam must receive a fourth part of the price for which it was sold. It is remarkable, that Pliny even mentions it as  
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an old custom for the Arabs to grant their princes a fourth of the value of their productions (L.)

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the Military Force of Sana.*

THE Imam keeps up a body of regular troops; but their precise number I could not learn. According to common opinion, it consists ordinarily of four thousand infantry, raised chiefly in Halchid-u-Bekil, and of one thousand cavalry.

The principal commanding officers of this army were the four Schiechs of *Hemdan*, *Wada*, *Sefian*, and *Kbaulan*. Beside these four general officers of high birth, many *Nakibs* or officers of inferior descent, some of whom had even been slaves in their youth, were also in the army. *Nakib* is the highest title that the Imam can confer. *Schiech* is a title that can only come by descent, and is peculiar to sovereign princes and independent lords.

In time of peace, a soldier serving in the cavalry has nothing to do but to take care of his horse, and attend the Imam or Dola to the mosque, according as he happens to be quartered at Sana, or in one of the provinces. The Arabs are extremely attentive to the breeding and management of their horses. Each horse is

under the care of a particular groom. Their heads are left at liberty ; but, to hinder them from kicking, they are confined almost close to the ground by the legs. After conducting their master home from the mosque, the cavalry perform their exercise, which consists merely in riding after one another at full gallop with their lances couched. As the nights are very cold in Yemen, cloths are always put upon the horses, except when they are ridden.

Most of those who serve in the cavalry have likewise civil employments, in which they occupy themselves in time of peace. Their arms are lances and sabres. Some carry pistols in the holsters of the saddle. They know nothing of the use of uniforms ; every one dresses after his own fancy.

The infantry in the garrisons are equally unemployed ; they never stand as centinels but at the gates of cities. The Dola is attended by foot-guards likewise to the mosque ; they march in rank and file. Four men in arms leap before them with antic gestures. On his return from the mosque, they salute him with some irregular discharges of musquetry. This too is all the exercise used by the infantry.

They are still more unsuitably clothed than the cavalry. The greater part wear nothing but a piece of linen about their loins, and a handker.

handkerchief upon their heads. Some are a little better dressed, with a blue cap of linen and a shirt.

The Arabs have a singular way of displaying their courage in engagements, not unlike the *devotement* to the infernal gods among the ancients. A foldier willing to signalize his attachment to his master, binds up his leg to his thigh, and continues to fire away upon the enemy, till either they be routed, or he himself be slain upon the field of battle. I could take this only for a fable when it was first told me; but I was afterwards convinced of its truth, by a late instance in the case of a Schiech of Haseid-u-Bekil, in the Imam's service, who devoted himself in this manner, in a battle against his own countrymen. Six slaves charged muskets for him, which he continued to fire upon the enemy, till being at last deserted by the Imam's troops, and even by his own servants, he was cut in pieces.

Those armies use no artillery. The Arabs know not how to manage cannons. In some towns they have renegadoes or vagabond Turks for gunners, little less ignorant than themselves.

The Imam, as he has no dread of enemies or corsairs upon the Arabic Gulph, needs not to keep up a naval force. His subjects are in general

neral unskilled in navigation, as I have had occasion to remark. The fishermen only discover some degree of courage and dexterity, venturing far out at sea in small canoes, scarcely furnished with oars.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the Arts and Commerce of Yemen.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the natural abilities of the Arabs, the arts receive no encouragement, and are totally neglected in the Imam's dominions, and no less throughout the neighbouring countries. Books are scarce in Arabia, because the Arabs have a dislike of printed characters. Their intricate alphabetical writing is best performed with the hand; they can hardly read books from our presses. It was for this reason, that the attempt of *Ibrahim Effendi* to introduce printing at Constantinople failed of success, and the renegado was ruined by the project. The Hebrew characters indeed are much easier cast, and therefore the Jewish presses at Constantinople, Smyrna, and Salonica, may possibly maintain their ground (M.)

The devotees among the Mussulmans, and chiefly the sect of the Sunnites, have a strong abhorrence against images; in consequence of  
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which there is neither painter nor sculptor in Yemen; but a great many inscriptions are engraven.

The Turks have some musicians; but the Arabs never apply to music as a separate art. In Yemen, I never heard any musical instrument but the drum and the pipe.

Much gold and silver work is prepared here; but the workers in these precious metals are all Jews and Banians. All the current coin too is struck by Jews.

All Arabian workmen sit while they work; a habit not consistent with very great activity. In walking, they have their feet always bare; as the wearing of their sandals would be troublesome. Many work with their feet, with little less dexterity than with their hands.

The mills in Yemen are of a very simple construction. But I saw in Tehama an oil-press wrought by an ox; and it is surprising, that the same mode of operation has never yet been employed in the corn-mills.

The manufactures of a people of so little industry cannot but be very trifling. No fabrics are manufactured in Yemen, nor any edged weapon, except a sort of crooked knives called *Jumbca*. The making of match-firelocks has been attempted here within these few years; it succeeds but indifferently. It is only of late that  
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glafs-works have been established at Mokha. Some coarse cloth is manufactured here; but not so much as is required for the use of the country. Broad-cloths are neither made nor worn here. The English brought some goods of this sort to Mokha, but were obliged to carry them back to India unfold.

A country, which affords so few articles for sale, cannot have a great trade. Coffee is almost the sole article exported from Yemen; a valuable commodity, in exchange for which many of those things which this country needs from abroad may well be obtained.

I have mentioned the imports in my account of the trade of Mokha. All the commerce of Yemen is carried on by this port, except only that some small quantities of coffee are exported by Loheya and Hodeida. What has been said, therefore, of the trade of Mokha, may be considered as relating to the trade of all Yemen.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the Principal Towns in the Imam's Dominions.*

IN the travels of our whole party, and in my own separate excursions, I traversed a great part of the Imam's dominions, which I have occasionally described in the course of my narrative. I

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am now therefore only to speak of some places more remote from the coast, which I had not occasion to visit myself, and which yet seem to deserve notice. I shall mention nothing but what I learned from persons who had full access to certain information.

I have already given a general description of Tehama, that vast plain through which I travelled from one end of it to the other. I have therefore nothing to add to what has been said concerning the governments of *Mokha*, *Has*, *Jebid*, *Beit el Fakih*, *Hodeida*, and *Iohya*.

In the highlands I saw and have described the governments of *Sana*, *Damar*, *Jerim*, *Me-chader*, *Dsjobla*, *Taa*, *Bellad Akkan*, *Udden*, *Hurras*, and *Mofhak*. The following are the other towns and districts, which I know only by hearsay.

*Doran*, in which several *Imams* reside, is a very ancient city, situate on the declivity of a mountain, not far from the roads between *Sana* and *Damar*. The district is under the government of a particular *Scheich*, as is also *Dsjebbei Scher-ki*, a great mountain in its vicinity.

*Katuba* is a city governed by a *Dola*, and defended by a strong citadel, lying in a fertile country, through which passes a fine river, whose waters are discharged into the sea at *Aden*. In this district



district is a range of wild and lofty mountains, bordering on the territories of the Imam.

*Hodsjeric* was originally a district and government belonging to Sana; became afterwards the domain of the famous Schiech Abd Urrab; but is now reunited to the dominions of the Imam. It contains *Dimlu*, a strong city, upon a mountain, which *Abulfeda* calls the King's Treasury; and *Mukatira*, a fortress said to be impregnable, which stands upon a lofty and precipitous hill, accessible only by one narrow path, which is shut up by a gate; but fertile on the summit in corn, and plentifully supplied with water.

*Osab* is a district held in fief from the Imam by one of his relations. In it are a small village, and three strong castles, upon hills.

*Kusma* is a small town, standing upon a high hill. Its confines I had occasion to see, where it meets Tehama. The mountains in it produce coffee, and extend far through the interior country. They are free Arabs who inhabit them. *Dsjebi*, a town, with a district of considerable extent, in which are a number of independent Schiechs, lies farther northward. These two districts form together the country of *Reme*; the merchants of which are often mentioned in ancient history. It is a fertile tract of country, abounding chiefly in grapes and coffee.

*Homrane*,

*Homran* is an ancient city, with a ruinous citadel. In a hill, in its vicinity, there are said to be three hundred and sixty reservoirs for water, cut in the rock. The district in which it lies, approaches near to the road between Sana and Beit el Fakih. *Burra*, a large and fertile mountain, is comprehended in it.

In the province of *Hofæsch*, extended over the mountains of *Melhan*, stands *Scfekin*, a town of considerable size.

*Munacha* is also a considerable town, and famous for its fairs. It is the seat of the Dola of *Harras*. In the heart of his government lies the district of *Safan*, in which Schiech Mecrami has an almost impregnable castle, which he took, some years since, by surprise.

North-west from Sana is a mountainous and extensive tract of country, which is considered as belonging to the Imam. But many Schiechs are in it, who acknowledge not this Prince for their Sovereign. He possesses, however, a number of towns in it, and governs these by Dolas, whose authority is commonly confined within the walls of the places of their residence. Such are the following :

*Tulla*, a strong town, with a citadel, in which a Dola resides, whose jurisdiction extends over another small town with a citadel. The rest of the environs belongs to Schiechs. In this

district is *Schbæhbava*, a large mountain, on which are more than three hundred villages, under the dominion of various Schiechs; famous, too, as having been the seat of *Khaffem*, the founder of the reigning family.

*Khamir*, a fortified town, situate in the middle of the territories of the confederates of *Hafschid-u-Bekil*.—It cost the Imam no small trouble to retain possession of this town.

*Medem*, the capital of *Hamdan*, in which the Schiech has a palace. This principality is two days journey in length, and one in breadth. It is reckoned among the dominions of Sana, because the reigning chief has been made to acknowledge himself the Imam's vassal.

*Amran*, a town with a citadel in a fertile country, which once belonged to the allies of *Hafschid-u-Bekil*. *Saad el Khammel*, one of the most ancient and famous kings of Yemen, is interred in this district.

## CHAP. X.

*Of the Princes and Schiechs within the Dominions of the Imam.*

ONE of the most singular and curious facts in the history of Arabia, is, its having always been, even from the most remote antiquity, parcelled  
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out among such a number of petty princes and independent lords. The history of Arabia exhibits, through its whole course, nearly the same political arrangements which appear to have prevailed in Europe, for some centuries, in the middle age; with this difference only, that the Schiechs have seldom been in a state of vassalage, and never knew the feudal government.

The nature and local circumstances of Arabia are favourable to the spirit of independence, which distinguishes its inhabitants from other nations. Their deserts and mountains have always secured them from the encroachments of conquest. Those inhabiting the plains have indeed been subdued; but their servitude has been only temporary; and the only foreign powers to whose arms they have yielded, have been those bordering on the two gulphs between which this country lies.

Independent Schiechs are therefore to be found among the *Bedouins*, or wandering Arabs, who escape oppression in consequence of the barrenness of their lands, and of the facility with which they retire into the deserts, whither no armies can follow them; and among the *Kobails*, or Arabian Highlanders, who inhabit wild and lofty chains of mountains, yet of sufficient fertility to afford subsistence to a frugal race

race, blocked up by their enemies in this retreat.

Of the latter are the Schiechs established within the Imam's dominions. The hills which they occupy are high and precipitous, yet cultivated up to their loftiest peaks, and abounding in productions of various sorts. These hills are very difficult of access; and the passes through the vallies are usually barred, either by fortifications, or by castles upon insulated rocks. A circumstance, to shew with what ease the Schiechs defend themselves, is, that the Imams, altho' they had little difficulty in expelling the Turks from the low country, have never been able, with all their efforts, to reduce those Highlanders, except only a small number who have been brought to recognize their territorial superiority.

I could not learn the names, either of all those Schiechs, or of their dominions. From the few, however, that came to my knowledge, one may conceive how numerous they are; since the domains of so many are intermixed through territories of no greater extent than those of the Imam of Sana.

There is not one independent Schiech in the Tehama. But, not far from the royal residence, in the province of Sana, is a tribe of Bedouins, denominated *Beni Dabbear*.

In the government of *Bellad Anes* are two Schiechs of eminence, the Schiech of *Bellad Anes*, and of the mountain of *Scherki*.

The lofty and extensive mountain of *Sumara* belongs in part to Schiech *Wadey*, and partly to the Schiech of *Beni Haffan*: These are both vassals to the Imam. But the town of *Hofæch*, in the vicinity of this mountain, is ruled by an independent Schiech.

The famous hill of *Sabbar*, which I mentioned in my account of *Taæs*, is said to be parcelled out among more than a hundred free and hereditary Schiechs, perfectly independent of the Imam, although surrounded on all hands by his territories. This fertile mountain consists of a chain of hills of various heights.

In the government of *Hodsjerie* are the Schiechs of *Manfora* and *Afæs*. The district of *Beni Jusof*, and the hill of *Habbeschi*, contain also a good number of hereditary independent lords.

I have already spoken of the prince of *Beni Aklan*, who resides at *Dorebat*, and of the independent Schiechs who possess Mount *Kamara*, lying within this principality. In giving an account of my excursion through the highlands of Yemen, in company with Mr Forskal, I at the same time mentioned the prince of *Udden*, and his dominions. In nobility of family, and dig-  
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nity of rank, these two princes are inferior to none in Arabia.

The prince of *Osab* is of the Imam's family, and a vassal to that prince; his principality being a territory that has been detached from the dominions of Sana.

In no district are there a greater number of considerable Schiechs than in *Kusma*, the most western range of the coffee mountains. This district, consisting entirely of precipitous hills, planted with coffee-trees to the very summits, is naturally populous, in consequence of affording so profitable a produce as coffee, in such abundance. Hence it is, that those gentry are here so rich and numerous. I was told of more than thirty, who draw large revenues from the markets within their dominions, at which an astonishing quantity of coffee is sold. These Schiechs are all independent, and reside in fortified castles upon the mountains.

The government of *Dsjebi* being, with respect to external appearance, soil, and productions, precisely of the same character as *Kusma*, is, like it, full of Schiechs of eminence. I learned the names of a dozen of them. They live in the same style as the others.

On Mount *Harras*, a large hill, fertile in vines, are likewise some castles, belonging to independent

dependent lords. This, among other districts, was seized by Schiech *Mecrami*.

In the territories which have been conquered by the Imams from the allies of Hafschiid-u-bekil, are still many free domains. Among ten or a dozen of the most eminent Schiechs, are the Schiechs *Beni Aschiab*, *Shemfan*, and *Marani*. Near *Tulla*, is also *Sejid Machfen* of *Hadsje*, a principality anciently held under the reigning family.

The mountain *Schæbhara*, with its three hundred villages, is shared out among a great many Schiechs, most of whom were related to the royal family before its elevation to throne of Sana.

The prince of Hamdan is distinguished for his power, and the antiquity of his family ; he being descended from the tribe of Hamdan, which was known long before the days of Mahomet. Yet, with these advantages, he has been reduced to a state of vassalage, probably because his country was too plain and too narrow for defence against an enemy. In this principality is *Muakeb*, a city of a singular construction ; its houses are all cut out in the natural rock.

From this detail, it appears, that the state of Yemen is not unlike to that of Germany. The Arabs want only a head ; they have princes, a body of nobility, and an aristocratic league.

But



But their constitution is not of recent origin ; nor did it take its rise in the forests. It is as ancient as society itself, and will probably last while the country endures in which nature has established it.

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## SECTION XX.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF HADRAMAUT.

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#### CHAP. I.

*Of the General Character, and of the Commerce of this Province.*

HADRAMAUT is bounded, on the west by Yemen, on the south-east by the ocean, on the north-east by Oman, and on the north by a great desert. It comprehends a wide extent of country, especially if, with the Arabians, we include in it the district of *Mahhra*. Mahhra seems to be like Tehama, a sandy plain, extending in breadth, from the shores of the ocean backward to where the hill country commences.

These

These plains have probably been once covered by the sea.

Such being the state of the coast, and of the Highlands, Hadramaut, like Yemen, exhibits great diversities of soil and surface. Some parts of it are dry and desert; but the hills are extremely fertile, and are intersected by well-watered vales.

The inhabitants of this province, too, are divided, like those of Yemen, into Arabs settled in towns, wandering Bedouins, and Kobails or Highlanders. A native of Hadramaut, with whom I had opportunities of conversing, described his country as the seat of science and religion. The other Arabs are less favourable in their accounts, and not without reason, if one may judge from the coarseness of the dialect spoken in this province. It differs so considerably from that of Yemen, that I needed an interpreter to assist me in conversing with the person who entertained me with the above pompous eulogium of his country. The religion of his countrymen must be a tissue of fantastic pieces of superstition; for the Sunnites are the prevalent sect among them.

Arabia the Happy, comprehending, as I have above remarked, the two provinces of Yemen and Hadramaut, enjoyed, in the remotest times, a very extensive commerce. Its exports con-

sifted not only in its own productions, but in those of India likewise, which were brought into its harbours, upon the shores of the ocean, by vessels from India. As the navigation of the Arabic Gulph was always reckoned dangerous, those articles of merchandize were conveyed by land into Egypt and Syria. The caravans were a source of wealth to the whole nation; the inhabitants of the towns gained by purchases and sales, and the Bedouins by hiring out their camels. There is, therefore, the greatest truth in the accounts of the ancients, which describe so pompously the opulence of the Happy Arabia, although its present state be far from flourishing.

Since the Europeans have discovered a different rout to India, the trade of South Arabia has necessarily declined. To Yemen the loss is made up by the exportation of such immense quantities of coffee; a traffic begun two centuries ago, and still encreasing: But Hadramaut, producing little coffee, has no such resource, and is therefore not likely to recover suddenly from the disadvantages which it has suffered by the loss of its Indian trade.

Yet this province still carries on some trade in its native productions; for these, ships from *Masfat* visit its harbours upon the ocean. The little coffee which it affords, incense, gum Arabic,

bic, dragon's-blood, myrrh, and aloes, are the articles of this trade. The incense of Arabia is not of the very best quality; but the aloes of *Soccatra*, an isle belonging to the princes of Hadramaut, has been always in the very highest estimation.

The inhabitants of Hadramaut have likewise some trivial manufactures. Yemen is furnished from this province with coarse cloths, carpets, and the knives called *Jambca*, which are hung from the girdle. But the inhabitants of Hadramaut being averse to a maritime life, the trade from their sea ports is all carried on in foreign bottoms (M.)

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Principal Towns in Hadramaut.*

THERE are in Hadramaut a good many considerable towns, which were known to the ancients, perhaps better than they are at present. Notwithstanding the pains which I took, I could learn the names only of a few of those places. What I know of the rest, I had from some persons not very well acquainted with the present state of Hadramaut. I shall repeat what was told me concerning some of those cities,

*Sebihan,*

*Schibam*, a large city, and the seat of a powerful prince, is eight days journey distant from *Sana*, and ten from *Mareb*. An Arabian from Mareb informed me, that he had not found a single village in *Dsjof*, on his way from his native city ; but that, as he travelled through Hadramaut, he had been in several considerable towns. *Schibam* seems to be the *Saba* of the ancients, from which the Sabeans were denominated. This people occupied the southern parts of Arabia, before Mareb became the capital of their empire.

*Doan*, in which a Schiech resides, is five and twenty days journey eastward from *Sana*, and eleven from *Keschim*. An inhabitant of Doan, whom I met with in Yemen, told me, that it was a larger and more elegant city than *Sana*.

*Dafar* is a well known sea-port town, from which incense, called in Arabia *Oliban* or *Liban*, is exported. This incense is not nearly so good as that of India. The Arabians are blamed for selling both their incense and their gum without purifying them. This neglect occasions a deterioration in the quality, and a reduction in the price. A Schiech likewise resides in *Dafar*.

*Keschim* is a sea-port town, and the seat of a sovereign prince. Its inhabitants are said to be highly civilized, and to receive all strangers hospitably

pitably. The English sometimes visit this harbour.

*Merbat* and *Hafek* are two cities, known only for the traffic which their inhabitants carry on in incense produced in that neighbourhood. The quantity of this incense is not so considerable as that which comes from *Dafar*; but it is better in quality than that from *Schæhhr*. The great consumption of incense in the Indian temples, and even in private houses, through some countries in the East, is what chiefly occasions the demand for this article. It is not used in the mosques.

*Ainad* is a considerable town, thirteen days journey from *Keschim*, and seven from *Schæhhr*. An inhabitant of this town whom I saw in *Mafkat*, told me, what divers other Arabians confirmed, that the tomb of the ancient prophet *Kachtan* or *Jaktan*, mentioned in the Koran, stands within a day's journey of *Ainad*. Even before the days of Mahomet, pilgrims used to visit this tomb. The inhabitants of *Hadramaut* still assemble at a certain time to perform their devotions there. A famous fair is held at it. It is remarked, that all pilgrimages to one place, for so many centuries, owe their continued existence to commerce.

This same Arab from *Ainad* named to me more than a score of cities, in the interior parts  
of

of the province, which he had visited. As I know nothing of them but their names, I shall not set down the bare list.

There are also several sea-ports, concerning which I could obtain no particular information. What was particularly striking in the lists of names mentioned to me, was the remarkable resemblance of the names of many of the present cities in Hadramaut, to those of the cities of Arabia spoken of by the most ancient historians. Many of these establishments, in this province, must have existed in the same state from the most remote antiquity.

These observations lead me to think, that a journey through this province might prove at least no less interesting than our journey through Yemen. The difficulties attending such an expedition, could not be greater than those which we had to struggle with. I was acquainted with a Turk, who related to me with what ease and safety he had visited the several sea-port towns in South Arabia. The inhabitants of that coast, remembering the wealth which strangers used to bring thither in former times, and long accustomed to receive them well, would undoubtedly give Europeans a favourable reception at present.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Sovereign Princes in Hadramaut.*

THE Bedouins, and inhabitants of the hills, have here, as well as through the rest of Arabia, a number of independent Schiechs; but, not knowing particulars, I can say nothing of them.

The coasts, and the adjacent country, are shared among sovereigns of higher dignity, whom travellers have called Kings, although they take only the title of Schiech or Sultan. The Schiech of Schibam I have already mentioned as one of the most powerful.

Doan belongs to a Schiech, whom I believe to be a descendent of Mahomet, and of the family of the Imams; for he who reigned in 1763 was called *Sejid Isâ el Amudi*. In a neighbouring city, are the tombs of all the princes of the illustrious house of Amudi.

The Schiech of Dabar is also a Sovereign Prince; but I know not either his name, or the extent of his power.

He of *Keschim*, called by some travellers, King, of *Fartak*, is the most powerful. His dominion comprehend a considerable number of cities, among which is that of *Fartak*; and hence the  
fancied,



fancied kingdom of Fartak, represented in various maps. One of the Princes of Keschim may have, some time or other, resided in that city, and may thus have given rise to the idea of a Sovereign of Fartak. Beside his possessions on the continent, the Schiech of Keschim is likewise Lord of the island of *Soccatra*, or *Soccatora*, famous for its aloes. The presumptive heir to the reigning Schiech is always governor of this island, which seems to have belonged to these Arabian Princes from time immemorial. Arrian relates that, in the period concerning which he writes, it was subject to the Sovereigns of the incense country. The first Portuguese who visited Arabia found the Prince of Keschim still in the undisturbed possession of this part of the ancient dominions of his family.

The principality of *Ainad* must be extensive; if the account may be credited, which I received from a native of the city of the same name. But I have reason to suspect, that the Sovereign of Ainad is one of those Sultans of Jafa who have conquered some territories in Hadramaut.

There are probably still other sovereign states in this widely extended province. But I had not opportunities of acquiring farther knowledge of a country, which, for many reasons, deserves to be better known.

## SECTION XXI.

## OF THE PROVINCE OF OMAN.

## CHAP. I.

*Of Oman in general.*

THE province of Oman is bounded on the east by the Ocean; on the north, by the Persian Gulph; on the west, and the south, by extensive deserts. I visited no part of it, but the environs of Maskat; and, therefore, do not speak concerning it from personal observation.

It is possessed by a number of petty Sovereigns, the most considerable of whom is the Imam of Oman or Maskat. The Princes of *Dsjau*, *Gabria*, *Gafar*, *Rank*, *Gabbi*, *Dabhara*, *Makaniat*, and *Seer*, have the title of *Schiech*.

The whole western side of Oman is one sandy plain, a day's journey in length, and extending from the village of *Sib* to the town of *Sebar*. The Imam's territories are mountainous to the very brink of the shore. The rivers continue to flow throughout the year, all, except

that near which Sohar stands, which, traversing an arid plain, loses itself among the sands, and reaches the sea only in the rainy season.

The country affords plenty of cheese, barley, lentiles, with several different sorts of grapes. Of dates such abundance is here produced, as to yield an annual exportation of several ships lading; and there is variety of other fruits, and of pulse. Here are also lead and copper mines. Fishes are so plentiful upon the coast, and so easily caught, as to be used not only for feeding cows, asses, and other domestic animals, but even as manure to the fields.

The inhabitants are of different sects in religion, and mutually regard one another as heretics. The subjects of the Imam follow one Mussulman doctor; those of the Schiechs another.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Territories of the Imam of Oman, or Maskat.*

THE territory possessed by the Imam of Oman is pretty extensive, and contains a good many towns, most of which are but little known. I shall mention only some few particulars, which I learned concerning the more remarkable among them.

*Rostak*, a city at some distance from the sea, is the seat of the Sovereign. In its neighbourhood

is *Dsjebbet Akdar*, the highest and largest mountain in Oman, and distinguished for its fertility in fruits, especially grapes. Sohar is an ancient and celebrated city, but greatly decayed.

South from Rostak, stands *Kalbat*, an ancient city, which was once in a flourishing condition.

The Imam of Oman possesses also *Kilca* and *Sinsjibar*, upon the eastern coast of Africa, which were, not long since, conquered by one of his ancestors.

The most important and best known city in the dominions of this Imam is Maskat; in consequence of which, he is, by many travellers, called King of Maskat. It stands at one end of a beautiful plain, beside a small gulph, encompassed with steep rocks, forming an excellent harbour, in which the largest vessels may find shelter. This harbour is likewise protected by forts; and the city thus fortified both by art and nature.

Arrian calls it *Mosca*, and speaks of it as being, even then, a great emporium of the trade of Arabia, Persia, and India. Maskat has ever enjoyed this advantage, and even at present, possesses a considerable trade. The Portuguese made themselves masters of it in 1508. Two churches, one of which is now a magazine, and the other the house of the *Wali* or Governor, still remain

to show that *they* were once established here. An hundred and fifty years after their conquest of Maskat, the Portuguese were driven hence by the Arabs, through the treacherous aid of a Banian, who had been robbed of his daughter by the Portuguese Governor.

In no other Mahometan city are the Banians so numerous as in Maskat ; their number in this city amounts to no fewer than twelve hundred. They are permitted to live agreeably to their own laws, to bring their wives hither, to set up idols in their chambers, and to burn their dead. If a Banian intrigues here with a Muffulman woman, government does not treat him with the same severity as he would meet with elsewhere.

With respect to the Imam's revenue, I could learn nothing, but that the duties levied upon merchant-goods amount to about an hundred thousand rupees. At Maskat, Europeans pay five per cent. upon imports ; Mahometans six and a half ; and Jews and Banians seven per cent. The Imam's natural subjects pay six per cent. in kind, upon dates exported ; which are the principal article that the country affords (N).

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Revolutions of Oman.*

THERE are in Oman three very ancient and illustrious families ; those of *Gafari*, *Hamoni*, and *Arrabi*. The latter pretends to be descended from the Koreisch of Mecca, who were famous before the days of Mahomet. However this may be, the family of Arrabi have long reigned at Maskat, but are not at present in possession of the supreme power. The events which degraded them from the throne are connected with the history of *Nadir Schah*, the last Monarch of Persia. In order to convey distinct ideas of them, it will be necessary to go back to some things that happened in the last century.

Imam *Malek*, of the house of Arrabi, was master of all Oman, and added to his dominions, by conquest, *Kunk*, *Kischme*, *Hormus*, and *Babarein*. His son still extended these conquests, making himself master of Kiloa and Sinsjibar, in Africa. But, in the reign of his grandson *Ben Seif*, the new Monarch of Persia, Schah Nadir, sent an army to conquer Oman. The Persians lost many of their number among the hills, and were repulsed. Ben Seif accordingly

ingly continued to occupy the throne till his death.

Upon his decease, *Mohammed Gafari*, prince of *Gabrin*, made himself master of the greater part of Oman, and assumed the title of Imam. His son *El Nafer* proved unable to maintain the conquests of his father. *Seif el Afdi*, son to the last Imam of the family of *Arrabi*, made himself be proclaimed Imam, and forced *Nafer* to content himself with his patrimony, the principality of *Gabrin*.

Imam *Seif el Afdi* was an indolent voluptuous prince. Not content with a numerous Harem, he would occasionally attempt the chastity of his subjects daughters. He addicted himself to the use of wine and strong liquors. He neglected his affairs; and, not paying his soldiers, who were *Caffer* slaves, suffered them to harrafs and pillage his subjects. This conduct rendered him so odious, that Sultan *Mursched*, one of his relations, easily procured himself to be proclaimed Imam, and took possession of almost all Oman.

Maskat still remained in allegiance to Imam *Seif*; and he maintained himself in it, by means of four ships of war, and of the profits of its trade. But, becoming yet more odious to the few subjects who still obeyed him, by perseverance in his imprudent conduct, he soon found it impossible to stand out longer. In this extremity, he

he resolved rather to yield up his dominions to the Persians, than to his relation Imam Mursched.

Sailing to Persia, with some vessels which still remained to him, he obtained from Nadir Schah a fleet, under the command of *Mirza Tæki Khan*, Governor of Schiraz. The Persian Admiral, upon arriving at Oman, made Imam Seif drunk, and seized Maskat, with its citadels. Seif not knowing well what to do, pursued his rival Mursched with the Persian forces, till Mursched, reduced to despair by the loss of his friends, died by a voluntary death. Imam Seif died himself soon after, at Rostak, oppressed with the mortification of finding himself duped by the Persians.

*Tæki Khan*, on his return to Schiraz, revolted against Nadir Schah, and sought to establish himself in the sovereignty of *Farsistan*. It is well known, how that the Persian Monarch quashed this rebellion, and punished its author. But these disturbances withdrew the attention of the Persians from the affairs of Arabia, and made them neglect to keep up the garrison in Maskat.



## CHAP. IV.

*Of the Reigning Imam.*

AT the period of Tœki Khan's expedition into Oman, there was at *Sohar* a governor of the name of *Achmed ben Sajid*, a native of a small town within the Imam's dominions. This Achmed, being a man of ability and enterprize, and seeing that, after the death of the two Imams, he should be under a necessity of submitting to such potent enemies as the Persians, made his peace with the invaders, and managed matters so well, that Tœki Khan confirmed him in his government.

During the civil wars in Persia, a prince of *Rank*, of the house of *Arrabi*, the Prince of *Sœer*, and a Nobleman named *Bel Arrab*, had shared among themselves the spoils of the last Imam. *Bel Arrab* had even assumed the title.

Achmed, seizing the Persian officers in *Mafkat* by surprise, forced the garrison to surrender, and made himself master of the city, without any effusion of blood. Gaining to his interest the first Cadi, who officiates as *Mufti* in Oman, he obtained from him a decision, that he, as the deliverer of his country, deserved to be raised

raised to the dignity of its Sovereign. In virtue of this decision, Achmed was proclaimed at Maskat, Imam of Oman.

As soon as Imam Bel Arrab heard this news, he prepared to attack his rival with an army of four or five thousand men. Achmed, too weak for resistance, retired into a fortress among the hills, in which he was invested by his enemy, and would have been obliged to surrender himself, had he not happily escaped in the disguise of a camel-driver. Being beloved in his former government, he found means to assemble some hundreds of men, and with these marched against Bel Arrab, whose army was still encamped among the hills. He divided his little troop into detachments, who seized the passes of the vallies, and sounded their trumpets. Bel Arrab, supposing himself to be circumvented by a strong army, was struck with a panic, fled, and was slain in his flight by a son of Achmed.

After the defeat and death of Bel Arrab, no person gave Imam Achmed ben-Sajid any further disturbance in the possession of the throne of Oman, except a son of Imam Mursched, who has made some unsuccessful efforts to deprive him of the sovereign authority. Notwithstanding these attempts, the reigning Imam has yielded up to his rival the town of *Nabbel*, with the territory belonging to it. A brother and

two sons of the last Imam, of the ancient family, are still living, in a private station indeed, but in circumstances so opulent, that they maintain three or four hundred slaves. The reigning Imam has married the daughter of one of those princes ; thus connecting his own family with the most illustrious persons in his dominions. It may be presumed, therefore, that the reigning family, although but newly royal, may continue to keep possession of the throne.

In 1765, Imam Achmed had reigned sixteen years, to the full satisfaction of his subjects. He saw justice promptly and uprightly administered, without partiality to rank or religion. Theft was scarce ever heard of. At Maskat goods remained safely in the streets by night ; and few were at the pains to bolt their doors. The reigning Imam's troops consist chiefly of Caffre slaves, who are well paid, armed with match-firelocks, and strictly disciplined. Imam Seif's slaves and soldiers were very thievish ; strangers had most to fear from them who were guardians of the public security.

To eke out his scanty revenue, the Prince does not disdain to deal himself in trade. He keeps four ships of war, and a number of small vessels, which, in time of peace, he employs in the conveyance of goods, chiefly to and from  
the

the eastern coast of Africa, where he possesses still Kiloa and Sinjibar. Some other ships are kept to guard the coast; but this they do so negligently, or fearfully, that pirates venture into the very road of Maskat.

The inhabitants of Oman, although not fond of sea-fights, are nevertheless the best mariners in all Arabia. They have several good harbours, and employ many small vessels in the navigation between Jidda and Basra. To this last town there come annually fifty such vessels, called *Trankis*; the structure of which I described in the account of our passage from Jidda to Loheya. They are sewed together without nails, the planks being bound with cords.

Two numerous tribes of Arabs are chiefly employed in carrying coffee by sea. One of these tribes once dwelled on the shores of the Persian Gulph; but, being harassed by turbulent neighbours, at length sought refuge in the dominions of the Imam of Omam.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Principality of Seer.*

THIS petty sovereignty extends from Cape *Musfendom* along the Persian Gulph. The Persians call it the country of *Djinnifer*. Another cape near

fishng is followed with advantage; and there is a considerable trade in foreign commodities.

With respect to religion, the inhabitants of Lachsa are divided. Those living in the towns are Shiites; but the peasants are, like the Bedouins, Sunnites. Here are also Jews, and a great many *Sabæans*, or Christians of St John.

This country was once a province of the Ottoman empire. The Arabs have long since, however, shaken off the Ottoman yoke. Many Turks, descended from the ancient Pachas, still remain in the province, and enjoy considerable estates, but have no share in the government.

The province of Lachsa belongs in sovereignty at present to the Schiech of the Arabian tribe of *Beni Khaled*. The reigning Schiech, in 1765, was *Arar*. The tribe of *Beni Khaled* is one of the most powerful in Arabia. They are so far spread through the desert, as often to harass the caravans passing between Bagdad and Kaleb. The greater part of Lachsa is inhabited by Bedouins, and other petty tribes; but these all acknowledge the dominion of the Schiech of *Beni Khaled*.

I could learn nothing concerning the cities in the interior parts of this province. Lachsa, the seat of the reigning Schiech, is probably a large city, containing considerable buildings.

*Katif,*

*Katif*, a town of some magnitude, stands upon the coast, at the distance of about five German miles from the isle of Bahhrein. The inhabitants earn their subsistence by the pearl-fishery. When any are too poor to fish at their own risk and expence, they hire their labour to stranger-adventurers, who resort hither in the hotter months of the year, the season for the fishing. The air of this country is, however, believed to be very insalutary in summer. The ruins of an old Portuguese fortress are still to be seen near this place.

*Koweit* or *Græn*, as it is called by the Persians and Europeans, is a sea-port town, three days journey from *Zobejer*, or old *Basra*. The inhabitants live by the fishery of pearls and of fishes. They are said to employ in this species of naval industry more than eight hundred boats. In the favourable season of the year, this town is left almost desolate, every body going out either to the fishing, or upon some trading adventure. *Græn* is governed by a particular *Schiech*, of the tribe of *Othema*, who is a vassal to the *Schiech* of *Lachsa*, but sometimes aspires at independence. In such cases, when the *Schiech* of *Lachsa* advances with his army, the citizens of *Græn* retreat, with their effects, into the little island of *Feludsje*. Near *Græn* are the remains of another Portuguese fortress.

Between the territories of the Schiech of Lachfa, and the dominions of the Sovereign of Oman, are a numerous tribe, denominated *Al Mufillim*, and possessing several considerable towns the names of which are unknown to me

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Province of Nedjed.*

THIS province is of vast extent. It comprehends all the interior parts of Arabia, lying between the provinces which I have above briefly described, and the desert of Syria. The soil is various; among the hills fertile, and bearing abundance of fruits, especially dates; but, being bounded by arid tracts of country, its rivers are only short streams, which, after passing through the vallies, have their waters absorbed in the sandy plains, before they can reach the ocean. Upon this account, the inhabitants are, in many places, obliged to dig deep wells; and cultivation is there difficult, or almost impossible.

The Bedouins inhabit a great part of this province. The remainder is mountainous, full of cities and villages, and parcelled out among so many petty Sovereigns, that almost every little town has its own Schiech. Formerly, when the  
power

power of the Sherriffes was at its height, many of these Schiechs, who were situate in the vicinity of Hedsjas, were obliged to pay tribute to the Sherriffe of Mecca. At present, they pay nothing.

The inhabitants of this vast country resemble the other Arabs in their moral qualities; they are at once robbers and hospitable. As those petty Sovereigns are so numerous in Nedsjed, it is impossible for any traveller to pass safely thro' this country; the first Schiech whose territory he enters, will be sure to rob him, if it were only to prevent a neighbour with whom he is at war from profiting by this act of rapacity, if he himself should abstain from it. The caravan indeed travels safe between Oman and Mecca, because it consists of beggars from whom nothing is to be gained. But the Schiechs of Nedsjed levy a contribution upon the caravan from Bagdad, on its way to Mecca, in the same manner as the Schiechs of Hedsjas levy contributions upon those from Syria and Egypt. I have, however, learned that the inhabitants of Nedsjed carry on a considerable trade among themselves, and with their immediate neighbours; and it is therefore not improbable that an European might travel in safety, even through this remote part of Arabia.

The people appear to be of a very warlike character, and are almost constantly in arms.



It is said that none of their young men is suffered to marry till after he has performed some gallant action.

Nedsjed is divided into two wide districts ; *El Arad*, which joins Oman ; and *El Kherdsje*, stretching to the confine of Yemen. Several of the towns in El Ared were named to me ; among others, *El Aijane*, the birth-place of the new prophet *Abul ul Wabbeb*, of whom I shall shortly speak.

In the district of *El Kerdsje*, extending northward from *Hedsjas* to the desert, is the city of Imam, famous, even before the days of Mahomet, for being the native city of Moseilama, who set himself up for a prophet. This district contains also many other cities.

North from Nedsjed, and about ten days journey from Bagdad, is the famous mountain of *Schamer*, of considerable extent and fertility. Between this mountain and Syria is a hilly tract of country, denominated *Dsjof al Sirhan*, populous and cultivated.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the new Religion of a Part of Nedsjed.*

IN this province are Sabæans, or Christians of St John, and a few Jews. Its other inhabitants are

are all Mahometans, and were once rigid Sunnites. Since time since, a new religion sprang up in the district of El Ared. It has already produced a revolution in the government of Arabia, and will probably hereafter influence the state of this country still farther.

The founder of this religion was one Abd ul Wahheb, a native of Aijâne, a town in the district of El Ared. This man, in his youth, first studied at home those sciences which are chiefly cultivated in Arabia; he afterwards spent some time at Basra, and made several journeys to Bagdad, and through Persia.

After his return to his native place, he began to propagate his opinions among his countrymen, and succeeded in converting several independent Schiechs, whose subjects consequently became followers of this new prophet.

These Schiechs, who had hitherto been almost constantly at war among themselves, were now reconciled by the mediation of Abd ul Wahheb, and agreed to undertake nothing in future without consulting their apostle. By this association, the balance of power in Nedsjed was destroyed: Those petty Schiechs, who could maintain their independence against any of the members of the league separately, were unable to resist the whole acting together. Wars also became, from the same causes, more keen and frequent, religion  
now

now intermingling itself with other grounds of dispute.

Abd ul Wahheb having thus reduced great part of El Ared, the Schiechs who were worsted, called in to their assistance Arar, Schiech of Lachfa. That Prince, from motives as well of policy as of religion, complied with their request, and sent an army into El Ared. This army being defeated by Abd ul Wahheb, Schiech Arar marched thither himself, at the head of four thousand men, with a train of artillery, consisting of three old pieces of cannon and a mortar. He laid siege to a fortress standing on a hill; but, as he could make no use of his artillery, he was compelled, after suffering some losses, to return to Lachfa.

I have already given some account of the adventures of Schiech Mecrami of Nedsjeran; and I at the same time mentioned that he was in some sort the head of a particular sect. An Arabian of Lachfa told me, that there was a great similarity between the principles of Abd ul Wahheb, and those of Schiech Mecrami. It seems to be so. At least those two innovators in religion must have been good friends; otherwise Schiech Mecrami could not have passed through Nedsjed with a small army, to attack the potent chief of Lachfa, as he did in 1764. It should seem, that he had joined Abd ul Wahheb, or rather  
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his son Mahomet, who had by this time succeeded his father, in order to reduce the Sunnite Schiechs. I was even told, that these two acting in concert, had subdued many of their neighbours. The rest wrote to all the Arabs in the neighbourhood of Basra, during the time of my stay in that city, begging their assistance.

After the death of Abd ul Wahheb, his son retained the same authority, and continued to prosecute his views. He sustains the supreme ecclesiastical character in El Ared. The hereditary Schiechs of the small states in that country, which were once independent, do indeed still retain a nominal authority; but Mahomed is, in fact, sovereign of the whole. He exacts a tribute, under the name of *Sikka*, or aid, for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Infidels.

The Sunnites complain of his persecution. But, more probably, this bigotted and superstitious sect hate and calumniate Mahomet for his innovations in religion. However the matter be, certain it is, that such of the inhabitants of Nedsjed as are unwilling to embrace the new religion are retiring to other parts of the country. *Zobayer*, the ancient Basra, which had decayed to little better than a hamlet, has been peopled by these refugees, and is now a large town.

As I had no opportunity of becoming acquainted with any of the disciples of this new religion, I can say nothing positive with respect to its tenets. I had a conversation upon this head indeed with an Arabian Schiech, who had been accustomed from his youth to travel with merchants through all Arabia, and had visited the principal cities in Nedsjed. This Bedouin Schiech, who appeared to be an intelligent man, gave me the following account of the religion in question.

Abd ul Wahheb taught, that God is the only proper object of worship and invocation, as the creator and governor of the world. He forbade the invocation of saints, and the very mentioning of Mahomet, or any other prophet, in prayer, as practices favouring of idolatry. He considered Mahomet, Jesus Christ, Moses, and many others, respected by the Sunnites in the character of prophets, as merely great men, whose history might be read with improvement; denying, that any book had ever been written by divine inspiration, or brought down from heaven by the angel Gabriel. He forbade, as a crime against Providence, the making of vows, in the manner of the Sunnites, to obtain deliverance from danger.

This account of the Schiechs does not entirely accord with what was told me by some Sunnites,

~~Sunnites~~ of the doctrines of Abd ul Wahheb. But, upon due head, it would be unfair to give credit to the disciples of a superstitious sect, whose false opinions are all combated by the new religion.

The Musulman religion, as professed by the Sunnites, is surely far different from what it was instituted by Mahomet. This sect follow the authority of some commentators, who explain the Alcoran by their own whimsies, and exalt their private opinions into doctrines of the Mahometan system. It acknowledges a long train of saints, who are invoked in cases of necessity, and to whom many absurd miracles are ascribed, and these said to have been wrought in favour of persons who addressed themselves to the saints, in preference to God. It gives faith to the virtues of amulets, and the efficacy of foolish vows. In short, it has gradually adopted many pieces of superstition, which are condemned in the Alcoran, and justified only by the strained interpretations of the Doctors. Other sects, such, for instance, as that of the Zeidites, have corrupted the religion of Mahomet less; although even among them it is far from remaining in its original purity.

The new religion of Abd ul Wahheb deserves therefore to be regarded as a reformation of Mahometism, reducing it back to its original simplicity.

simplicity. He has gone farther, perhaps, than some other reformers; but an Arab<sup>man</sup> hardly be expected to act in such matters <sup>with</sup> a delicate hand. Experience will here shew, whether a religion, so stripped of every thing that might serve to strike the senses, can maintain its ground among so rude and ignorant a people as the Arabs.

The imposture of Schiech Mecrami is nowise inconsistent with the spirit of reformation. The Schiech, taking advantage of the rudeness of his countrymen, has impressed them with a fanatical idea of the efficacy of his prayers, giving out, that he obtains in this way whatever he asks from God. This confidence in the power of prayer is not inconsistent with simplicity of doctrine. We have among ourselves instances, that it is apt to seize upon the mind, in an age illuminated by science, and professing the purest of religions.

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## SECTION XXIII.

OF THE INDEPENDENT ARABIAN STATES UPON  
THE SEA-COAST OF PERSIA.

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CHAP. I.

*Of the Arabs inhabiting around the Persian Gulph.*

OUR geographers are wrong, as I have elsewhere remarked, in representing a part of Arabia as subject to the Monarchs of Persia. So far is it from being so, that, on the contrary, the Arabs possess all the sea-coast of the Persian empire, from the mouths of the Euphrates, nearly to those of the Indus.

These settlements upon the coast of Persia belong not, indeed, to Arabia properly so called. But, since they are independent of Persia, and use the same language, and exhibit the same manners, as the native inhabitants of Arabia, I shall here subjoin a brief account of them.

It is impossible to ascertain the period at which the Arabians formed their settlements up-



on this coast. Tradition affirms, that ~~they have~~ been established here for many centuries. From a variety of hints in ancient history, it may be presumed, that these Arabian colonies occupied their present situation in the time of the first kings of Persia. There is a striking analogy between the manners ascribed to the ancient *Ishyophagi*, and those of these Arabs.

They live all nearly in the same manner, leading a seafaring-life, and employing themselves in fishing, and in gathering pearls. They use little other food but fish and dates; and they feed also their cattle upon fish.

They prize liberty as highly as do their brethren in the desert. Almost every different town has its own Schiech, who receives hardly any revenue from his subjects; but, if he has no private fortune, must, like his subjects, support himself by his industry, either in carrying goods, or in fishing. If the principal inhabitants happen to be dissatisfied with the reigning Schiech, they depose him, and choose another out of the same family.

Their arms are a match-firelock, a sabre, and a buckler. All their fishing-boats serve occasionally as ships of war. But a fleet like this, that must frequently stop to take fish for food, when they should pursue the enemy, can never perform any very great exploits. Their wars  
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are mere skirmishes and inroads, never ending in any decisive action, but producing lasting quarrels; and a state of continual hostility.

Their dwellings are so paultry, that an enemy would not take the pains to demolish them. And as, from this circumstance, these people have nothing to lose upon the continent, they always betake themselves to their boats at the approach of an enemy, and lie concealed in some isle in the Gulph till he have retreated. They are convinced that the Persians will never think of settling on a barren shore, where they would be infested by all the Arabs who frequent the adjacent seas.

These Arabs are Sunnites. They regard the Persians, who are Shiites, with abhorrence, and shun all alliance with them. The mutual hatred of the two sects, was even one cause of the failure of Nadir-Shah's attempt to subdue these Arabs. In the prosecution of this object, the usurper had, at immense expence, equipped a fleet of twenty-five large ships upon the Persian Gulph. But, as he had no Persian sailors, he was obliged to take Indians, who were Sunnites. These refusing to fight against their brethren of the same orthodox faith, massacred their Shiite officers, and carried off the ships. Towards the end of his life, Nadir-Shah was meditating to seize these Arabs, to transport them to the  
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shores of the Caspian Sea, and to settle a colony of Persians in their room. His tragical death prevented the execution of this project; and the disturbances in Persia have ever since prevented all incroachments from that quarter upon the liberty of these Arabs (o).

Their government and present political situation seem to me to bear a great resemblance to those of ancient Greece. Hostile engagements are continually a-fighting, and important revolutions happening upon the Persian Gulph; but the Arabs have no historian to spread their fame beyond their own narrow confines.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of Places subject to the Dominion of Persia.*

THE kings of Persia, although not masters of these coasts, yet retained some places upon them. In later times, the Persian governors of these places have shaken off their allegiance, and have, in some measure, erected them into independent sovereignties. The chief of these are *Gambron*, and *Hormus*.

*Gambron*, a sea-port town in the province of Laristan, belonged anciently to the Persian Monarch. After the death of Nadir-Schah, a Persian

ian, named *Naser Khan*, made himself master of the province, and, by consequence, of the city. He acknowledges himself vassal to *Vakeel Kerim Khan* of Schiraz, yet pays no tribute, and respects not the Vakeel's authority, unless when he comes with his army to compel him.

The city of *Gambron*, which has been also called *Bender Abbas*, was famous through all the last century, and in the beginning of the present, as the port of Schiraz, and of all the south of Persia. Its trade was, at that time, very extensive. At present it is very low; nor is there a single European counting-house in the city. This decline has been occasioned by the domestic disturbances in Persia, and the wars and disputes between the French and the English. The Dutch for a while continued to carry on a petty trade here. But, since they formed a settlement in the isle of *Karek*, they have entirely deserted *Gambron*.

The isle of *Ormus*, so celebrated of old, now retains nothing of its ancient splendour. It belongs at present to *Mulla Ali Shah*, a Persian, who made himself master of it immediately after the death of *Nadir-Shah*, whose admiral he had been. This Prince of *Ormus* possesses likewise a part of the isle of *Kishme*, the other part being subject to the Prince of *Socr*.

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South from Laristan is *Minau*, a considerable inland town, six leagues distant from the sea-shore. The inhabitants of the district in which it lies are Shiites, and are chiefly employed in agriculture; from these circumstances, they are sometimes induced to acknowledge the authority of the Chan of Laristan.

A tribe of Arabs, denominated *Belludgc*, inhabit between Minau and Cape *Jaske*. They are masters of a good many vessels, and carry on a considerable trade with Basra, upon the Arabic Gulph, and even venture as far as to the coasts of India. These Arabs are Sunnites; and unity of religious sentiments has occasioned their joining the party of the *Afghans* in the late revolutions of Persia.

Some geographers represent these Belludgc as inhabiting all along the Persian coast, to the mouths of the Indus, and have described them as a warlike people, addicted to piracy. I know not whether they are to be considered as independent, or as tributary to Persia. More probably, they acknowledge no sovereign authority but that of their own Schiechs. Some narratives of travels, performed in the last century, relate the extraordinary adventures of a Prince of *Jaske*, who withstood the power of Shah Abbas, till he was, at length, taken off by treachery. His widow continued to resist the Persian King, and

and performed deeds worthy of the heroines in the ages of chivalry. But, it is to a Schiech of the Belludge that the story is properly to be referred.

The country from Bender Abbas, northward to *Delam*, resembles the Tehama in Arabia; it is an arid plain, and is called by the Persians *Kermesir*, or the hot country. In this district I know no place but *Khamir*, a castle situate on a precipitous rock, which, with a small tract adjoining, is the property of a particular Schiech. Ships come hither for cargoes of sulphur, of which there is abundance in the neighbourhood.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the Territories of the Tribe of Houle.*

THIS numerous tribe are masters of all the coast from Bender Abbas to Cape Berdistan, and possess all the ports in this extent of coast. One part of the tract is parched and barren; but a range of hills, like *Dabr Ajban*, extend nearly to the sea, and afford wood, which is cut down and exported by the inhabitants.

Notwithstanding these natural advantages, the Arabs of Houle do not cultivate their lands, but live by hunting and fishing. They are Sunnites:  
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and are esteemed among their neighbours for valour. If their forces could be brought to act in combination, they might easily conquer all the cities upon the Persian Gulph: But almost every city is subject to a particular Schiech; and, although these Schiechs are all descendants from the same family, they choose rather to remain petty and poor, than to raise themselves to a more opulent and respectable condition, by submitting to act in concert, under the direction of one Grand Schiech.

The following are the Schiechs or Princes of the tribe of Houle:

The Schiech of Seer, whom I mentioned in the description of Oman; but who, being originally from this country, and of the tribe of Houle, possesses, in the neighbourhood of Gambroon, the cities of *Kunk*, *Lundsje*, and *Ras Hetti*. His subjects export wood for fuel and charcoal.

The Schiechs of *Mogbo* and *Tsjærack*. The inhabitants of the latter of these districts also export wood; and are said to be the bravest of all the tribe of Houle.

Lastly, the Schiechs of *Nachelo*, *Nabend*, *Aaloe*, *Tæhhrie*, *Schilu*, and *Konkoun*. The inhabitants of *Nachelo* are esteemed to be very skilful divers. In the city of *Konkoun*, the inhabitants of which are of a more pacific character

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ner than the other branches of the tribe of Houle, both Jews and Banians reside.

Persians, who have no ships, but live by husbandry, occupy the tract between the principality of *Abu Schæhhr* and *Cape Berdistan*.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Principalities of Abu Schæhhr and Bender Rigé.*

ABU SCHÆHHR, the capital of the independent state of the same name, possesses a commodious harbour, in which ships can come up close to the houses. This circumstance induced Nadir Shah to station a fleet here, of which some remains are to be still seen. Since that time, this city has been better known, and more considerable, It is at present the sea-port town of Schiraz; and the English, the only European nation who continue to trade with Persia, have a factory here.

The Arabs inhabiting the district of Abu Schæhhr are not of the tribe of Houle. There are among them three eminent families; the two first of which have been, from time immemorial, settled in this country. The third, named *Matarisch*, came lately from Oman, where they were employed in fishing, entered into alliance with the other two, and found means to usurp



the sovereign authority, which they have now held for several years.

The present Schiech, *Nasër*, of the family of *Maturisch*, possesses likewise the isle of Bahhrein, upon the coast of Arabia, by which he is enabled to keep on foot some shipping. He also has considerable domains in *Kermesir*, which he holds from Kerim Khan, with whom Nasër's children are placed as hostages for their father's fidelity. It is a happy circumstance for Schiraz, that the Prince of Abu Schæhhr can thus be retained in the interests of Persia by means of his possessions in Kermesir.

Schiech Nasër was a Sunnite; but, in hopes of being appointed Admiral of the Persian fleet, he became a Shiite, and married a Persian lady. These two steps have proved very injurious to him and his family. He is odious to his subjects and neighbours; and his children are no longer counted among the Arabian nobility.

*Bender Rigk*, the seat of the prince of this name, is a city encompassed with walls in an indifferent state, and lies north from Abu Schæhhr. The petty state, of which this is the capital city, comprehends several other places in Kermesir, which render its Sovereign in some measure dependent upon *Kerim Khan*. The Arabs of this principality are chiefly addicted to

a seafaring-life; the Persians inhabiting its back parts are husbandmen.

The reigning family of Bender Rigk are of the Arabian tribe of *Beni Saab*, and are originally from Oman; but the grandfather of the present prince, having become a Shiite, and married a Persian lady, this family are no longer counted by the Arabs among their genuine nobility.

The reigning Prince of Bender Rigk, *Mir Mahenna*, is distinguished through this country for his vices and cruelties, as one of the most execrable tyrants that ever existed. He made servants murder his father in his own presence, because the old man had a predilection for his eldest son. He killed his mother, because she reproached him for his crimes. He caused his brother, and sixteen of his other relations, to be assassinated, that he might establish himself in unquestioned possession of the throne. He drowned two of his sisters, because a neighbouring prince had asked one of them in marriage. He exposes all the female children that happen to be born to him. In 1765, this detestable monster was under the age of thirty years.

Mir Makenna had fallen twice into the hands of Kerim Khan. From his first captivity he made his escape, upon a defeat which the Governor

vernor of Persia suffered. He obtained his liberty the second time, by the good offices of his sister, who was married to a Persian officer. Upon returning into his own dominions, he immediately began to pillage the caravans which travelled between Schiraz and Abu Schæhr, and to practise piracy. Kerim Khan prepared to chastise him, and besieged his capital, but without success.

In the year 1765, the same Kerim Khan sent to demand payment of the tribute due for his possessions in Kermesir; but Mir Mahenna maltreated the officer who was sent on the errand, and caused his beard to be shaven. Kerim Khan then sent a strong army against him, which conquered *Bender Rigk*, and all his territories. Mir Mahenna had, however, prudently retired, before it was too late, with his troops, and a part of his subjects, into a desert isle called *Khoueri*, where he waited till the Persian army should retire from his country. After they were gone, he returned out of the island, expelled the garrison from *Bender Rigk*, and recovered possession of his dominions.

The tyrant had abandoned himself to drunkenness; and had begun to exercise his cruelties upon his troops to such excess, as to cut off the nose and ears of some of the principal officers; yet his soldiers were still so steadily attached

ached to him, that, even in the period of his exile, he took the isle of Karek from the Dutch. A band of robbers never abandon their chief, while he continues to share the plunder among them.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Tribe of Kiab, and their Schiech Soliman.*

THE Arabian tribe of *Kiab*, or, as the Persians pronounce it, *Tsjab*, inhabit the farthest point upon the side of the Persian Gulph. They were in small consideration before the reign of their present Schiech Soliman, whose fame hath even reached Europe, in consequence of a quarrel he had with the English, in which he took some of their ships.

This Schiech took advantage of the troubles of Persia, and of the defects in the government of Basra. He began with subduing his petty independent neighbours; after which he made himself master of several large districts in Persia, and promised tribute to the Khans who were contending for the throne of that distracted empire. None of them ever attempted to exact tribute but *Kerim*, and he contented himself with a small sum. Soliman then extended his conquests

conquests towards Basra. He cultivated the friendship of the *Ajals*, the chief people of that country ; and at last made himself master of all the isles between the mouths of the Euphrates, commonly called the country of *Schat el Arrab*.

Having pushed his conquests to the navigable rivers, he endeavoured to form a naval force. He built his first vessel in 1758 ; and, in 1765, he had ten large, and seven small ships.

In the same year, 1765, Kerim Khan sent a force against him, too powerful for him to resist. He then transported his treasures and troops from isle to isle, till he had carried them to the west of *Schat el Arrab*. The Persians could not pursue him for want of ships, and were therefore obliged to retire. The Pacha of Bagdad then ordered his forces to attack Soliman ; but he retreated among the isles, and escaped the Turks now, as he had before avoided the Persians.

The territory of the tribe of Kiab extends from the desert of Arabia to the country of Hindian, and northward to the principality of *Havisa*. It is watered by several rivers, large and small. It abounds in dates, rice, grain, and pasture. Its principal cities are *Damck*, lying within Persia, *Hafar*, and *Ghoban*, the seat  
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of a Schiech, near one of the mouths of the Euphrates.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of some other independent States.*

*HINDIAN*, north from Bender Rigk, and bordering on the possessions of the tribe of *Kizb*, is a small district, subject to a particular Sovereign. The Arabs who inhabit it live upon the produce of their lands, and their cattle.

*Havisa*, a city and district in the back parts of the country bordering on the Persian Gulph, belongs to a descendent from Mahomet. This Prince is named *Maula*, and enjoys the privilege of coining money.

Upon the eastern coast of the Persian Gulph are many isles, and most of them inhabited. Except Ormus, none of them constitutes an independent state. The different princes on the continent possess the isles adjoining to their respective dominions.

On the western side of the Gulph is an isle, or rather a cluster of isles, known to the Europeans by the name of *Bahbrein*. The Arabs call the largest of these isles *Aval*; and each of the smaller has its particular name. As this isle is famous for the pearl-fishery, and has under-

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gone many revolutions, and often changed its master, I must lay a few words of it.

*Bahbrein* is a fortified city, upon the isle, known either by the same name, or by the name of *Aval*. In this isle were once three hundred and sixty towns and villages. At present it contains, beside the capital, only sixty wretched villages. A long series of wars have ruined the others.

This isle produces great abundance of dates. But its chief dependence is upon the pearl-fishery, as the best pearls are found here in great abundance. The duties upon the two articles of dates and pearls afford its Sovereign a lack of rupees, or 300,000 French livres. Out of this revenue he is obliged to maintain a garrison in the city.

Bahrein belonged once to the Portuguese. When they were driven out of the Persian Gulph, it fell into the hands of the Schiech of Lachsa, but was taken from him by the Persians. The Imam of Oman then made himself master of it, but gave it up again to the Persian Monarch for a sum of money. After some time, during the inroad of the *Afghans*, the Persian Governor gave it up to the Schiech of Nabend, of the tribe of Houle. Another Houlite, the Schiech of *Tæhbri*, expelled him of Nabend. Nadir Shah's admiral then seized it; but, after his

his departure, the Schiech of Tæhhrie recovered it. During the late troubles in Persia, the Schiech of *Afloe* made himself master of this isle, but was immediately dispossessed by the Princes of Abu Schæhhr and Bender Rigk, who conquered it together. The first of these princes drove out the second, and was in his turn expelled by the Beni Houle. In 1765, it had returned again into the possession of the Schiech of Abu Schæhhr, and he was then sole Monarch of the isle of Bahhrein.

From this narrative, the reader may form an idea of the continual revolutions which take place among this multitude of petty princes. At Basra I learned some particulars concerning their complicated quarrels, which I could not well comprehend: I was told, that every Arab Prince was always at open war with two or three others of his own nation.

The navigation is continually disturbed and interrupted by these strong quarrels. On board any Arabian vessel, passengers are always in danger of falling into the hands of one enemy or another. It is only on board a European ship, which the Arabian small craft dare not attack, that one can perform this voyage in safety.



## CHAP. VII.

*Of the Isle of Karek.*

THIS isle, which lies on the east coast of the Persian Gulph, between Abu Schæhhr and Bender Rigk, contains only a single village; but the aqueducts cut in the rocks, which still remain, shew it to have been once more populous in proportion to its extent, which is about five leagues in circumference.

Karek has become famous, in consequence of the settlement lately formed upon it by the Dutch, and since given up by them. As this event has made some noise in the world, I shall give a brief account of it.

The Dutch carried on a great trade to Basra, and had for the principal director of their factory there a Baron Kniphausen, who was much respected in that city. This German having embroiled himself with the Governor, in consequence of some affair of gallantry, was cast in prison, and might have lost his head, had he not paid a large sum of money for his liberty. Before he sailed for Batavia, he obtained from the factory at Basra a written attestation of the innocence of his conduct; and the Dutch East-India Company approved of all he had done.

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In consequence of his difference with the Governor of Basra, Mr Kniphaufen had agreed with Mir Naser, Prince of Bender Rigk, to whom Karek belonged, that the Dutch should, for a certain annual rent, be allowed to seat their factory there. The government at Batavia relished the project, which was, in fact, a very wise one, and sent the Baron, with two great ships, to carry it into execution.

Upon arriving at Karek, he seized some ships from Basra, and detained them, till he received restitution of the sum which he had paid for his liberty. He built a large square magazine upon the island, and raised, by degrees, four towers at its corners, each of which he furnished with six cannons. Mir Naser, dissatisfied at the erection of these fortifications, attacked the Dutch, who attacked him in his turn, but could not follow him into his fastnesses. This petty war proved, however, very expensive to the company.

Baron Kniphaufen, after governing Karek with sovereign authority for five years, was succeeded by Mr Vanderhulst, who having been previously employed at Basra, and knowing the Arabs, thought it his duty to prosecute with *Mir Mahenna*, the new Prince of Bender Rigk, the war which had been waged against his father. Mir Mahenna, by a stratagem, seized two armed vessels belonging to the Dutch, and

unsuccess-

unsuccessfully attempted a descent upon the island. Mr Vanderhulst then enlarged his fortifications, and formed the plan of a town, which was soon peopled with Persians and Arabs.

This settlement might be lucrative to the officers employed about it; but the expences of the war and the garrisons consumed the Company's profits, and they determined to abandon it; but the prospect of an advantageous trade with Persia induced them to hold it some time longer. The new Governor, Mr *Buschmann*, therefore concluded a peace with Mir Mahenna; after which the trade met with no interruption.

His successor, Mr *Van Houting*, although in other respects a man of merit, did not conduct himself so prudently, being a stranger to the genius and temper of the Arabs, and having no experienced officers under him. He was not careful to observe a neutrality in the quarrels between the Prince of Abu Schæhr and Mir Mahenna; but, in concert with the former, attacked the latter in his retreat in the island of *Khoncri*. Mir Mahenna allowed his enemies to approach; and, when he saw them in security, fell upon them with his cavalry, and entirely discomfited the troops of the Dutch, and of Abu Schæhr.

Emboldened by this success, Mir Mahenna made a descent upon the isle of Karek, and besieged the town. Mr Van Houting suffered himself to be outwitted by a Persian, by whom he was persuaded to permit Mir Mahenna to enter the fort with a small retinue, in order to agree upon terms for an accommodation. The Arab then made the Dutch garrison prisoners, and sent them to Batavia. This event happened in the end of December 1765.

It is not probable that the Dutch East-India Company will put themselves to the trouble of expelling the conqueror, and renewing their establishment on the isle of Karek.

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## SECTION XXII.

OF THE BEDOUINS, OR WANDERING ARABS.

## CHAP. I.

*Peculiarities in the Manners of the Bedouins.*

THE Arabs settled in cities, and especially those in the sea-port towns, have lost somewhat of their distinctive national manners, by their intercourse with strangers; but the Bedouins, who live in tents, and in separate tribes, have still retained the customs and manners of their earliest ancestors. They are the genuine Arabs, and exhibit, in the aggregate, all those characteristics which are distributed respectively among the other branches of their nation.

I have repeatedly noticed the different acceptations in which the word *Schceh* or *Schiech* is used. Among the Bedouins it belongs to every noble, whether of the highest or the lowest order. Their nobles are very numerous, and compose in a manner the whole nation; the plebeians

Sejians are invariably actuated and guided by the Schiechs, who superintend and direct in every transaction.

The Schiechs, and their subjects, are born to the life of shepherds and soldiers. The greater tribes rear many camels, which they either sell to their neighbours, or employ them in the carriage of goods, or in military expeditions. The petty tribes keep flocks of sheep. Among those tribes which apply to agriculture, the Schiechs at least live always in tents, and leave the culture of their grounds to their subjects, whose dwellings are wretched huts.

It is the difference in their ways of living that constitutes the great distinctions which characterise the different tribes. The genuine Arabs disdain husbandry, as an employment by which they would be degraded. They maintain no domestic animals but sheep and camels, except perhaps horses. Those tribes which are of a pure Arab race live on the flesh of their buffaloes, cows, and horses, and on the produce of some little ploughing. The former tribes, distinguished as noble by their possession of camels, are denominated *Abu el Abaar*; and the second *Moadan*. The latter are esteemed a middle class, between genuine Arabs and peasants. I have heard some tribes mentioned contemptuously, because they kept buffaloes and cows. The

*Moadan*.

*Moadan* transport their dwellings from one country to another, according as pasturage fails them ; so that a village often arises suddenly in a situation where, on the day before, not a hut was to be seen.

The genuine Bedouins, living always in the open air, have a very acute smell. They dislike cities, on account of the foetid exhalations produced about them. They cannot conceive how people, who regard cleanliness, can bear to breathe so impure air. I have been assured, by persons of undoubted veracity, that some Bedouins, if carried to the spot from which a camel has wandered astray, will follow the animal by smelling its track, and distinguish the marks of its footsteps, by the same means, from those of any other beasts that may have travelled the same way. Those Arabs, who wander in the desert, will live five days without drinking, and discover a pit of water by examining the soil and plants in its environs. They are said to be addicted to robbery ; and the accusation is not entirely unfounded ; but may be laid equally to the charge of all nations that lead an erratic life. The Schiechs ride continually about on their horses or dromedaries, inspecting the conduct of their subjects, visiting their friends, or hunting. Traversing the desert, where the horizon is wide as on the ocean, they perceive travellers at a distance.

As travellers are seldom to be met with in those wild tracts, they naturally draw nigh to those whom they discover, and are tempted to pillage the strangers when they find their own party the strongest. Besides, travellers passing through these deserts go generally in caravans; and a single person, or a small party, has a singular and suspicious appearance, which is a temptation to the Bedouins.

In Arabia, as in all other thinly inhabited countries, robbery is practised; but the Arabian robbers are not cruel, and do not murder those whom they rob, unless when travellers stand upon the defensive, and happen to kill a Bedouin, whose death the others are eager to revenge. Upon all other occasions they act in a manner consistent with their natural hospitality. Upon this head I have heard some anecdotes, which it may not be amiss to introduce here.

A Mufti of Bagdad, returning from Mecca, was robbed in Nedsjed. He entered into a written agreement with the robbers, who engaged to conduct him safe and sound to Bagdad for a certain sum, payable at his own house. They delivered him to the next tribe, those to a third; and he was thus conveyed from tribe to tribe, till he arrived safe at home.

An European, belonging to a caravan which was plundered, had been infected with the plague



upon his journey. The Arabs, seeing him too weak to follow his companions, took him with themselves, lodged him without their camp, attended him till he was cured, and then sent him to Basra.

An Englishman, who was travelling express to India, and could not wait for the departure of a caravan, hired two Arabs at Bagdad, who were to accompany him to Basra. By the way he was attacked by some Schiechs, against whom he at first defended himself with his pistols; but, being hard pressed by their lances, was forced to surrender. The Arabs, upon whom he had fired, beat him till he could not walk. They then carried him to their camp, entertained him for some time, and at last conducted him safe to Basra. When Mr Forskal was robbed by the Arabs in Egypt, a peasant, who accompanied him, was beaten by the robbers, because he had pistols, although he had made no attempt to defend himself with them.

The pillaging of the caravans is not always owing merely to the propensity which the Arabians have to robbery. Their pillaging expeditions are commonly considered by themselves as lawful hostilities against enemies who would defraud the nation of their dues, or against rival tribes, who have undertaken to protect those illegal traders.

In one of those expeditions, a few years since, undertaken against the Pacha of Damascus, who was conductor of the Syrian caravan to Mecca, the tribe of *Anäse*, which gained the victory, showed instances of their ignorance, and of the simplicity of their manners. Those who happened to take goods of value knew not their worth, but exchanged them for trifles. One of those Arabs having obtained for his share a bag of pearls, thought them rice, which he had heard to be good food, and gave them to his wife to boil, who, when she found that no boiling could soften them, threw them away as useless.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the political Constitution of the wandering Arabs.*

TREATING of the government of the Arabs in general, I said a few words occasionally concerning that of the Bedouins. To avoid unnecessary repetition, I shall add here only a few particulars concerning chiefly their political interests, in respect to the neighbouring nations.

The dignity of Schiech is hereditary, but is not confined to the order of primogeniture. The petty Schiechs, who form the hereditary nobility,  
choose

choose the grand Schiech out of the reigning family, without regarding whether he be more nearly or more distantly related to his predecessor.

Little or no revenue is paid to the grand Schiech; and the other Schiechs are rather his equals than his subjects. If dissatisfied with his government, they depose him, or go away with their cattle, and join another tribe. These emigrations, which happen pretty frequently, have reduced some tribes, which were once potent, to a low and inconsiderable state; and have greatly augmented the numbers and power of some petty tribes.

Personal slavery is established among the Bedouins; but none of them are *ascripti glebæ*. A peasant, when dissatisfied with his master, may quit his service, and remove any where else.

The Bedouins, who live in tents in the desert, have never been subdued by any conqueror; but such of them as have been enticed, by the prospect of an easier way of life, to settle near towns, and in fertile provinces, are now, in some measure, dependent on the Sovereigns of those provinces.

Such are the Arabs in the different parts of the Ottoman empire. Some of them pay a rent or tribute for the towns or pasturages which they occupy. Others frequent the Banks of the Euphrates, only in one season of the year; and, in winter,

winter, return to the desert. These last acknowledge no dependence on the Porte.

Neither are, properly speaking, subject to the Turks; to whom, on the contrary, they would be dangerous neighbours, if the Pachas did not find means to sow dissensions among the tribes and great families, when there are more than one pretender to the dignity of Schiech of Schiechs.

The policy of the Turks occasions frequent wars among the Bedouins; but these are neither long nor bloody.

Whenever the Turks interfere in their quarrels, all the tribes combine to repulse the common enemy of the whole nation.

Every Grand Schiech justly considers himself as absolute lord of his whole territories; and accordingly exacts the same duties upon goods carried through his dominions as are levied by other princes. The Europeans are wrong in supposing the sums paid by travellers to the Grand Schiechs to be merely a ransom to redeem them from pillage.

The Turks, who send caravans through the desert to Mecca, have submitted to the payment of these duties. They pay a certain sum annually to the tribes who live near the road to Mecca; in return for which, the Arabs keep the wells open, permit the passage of merchandize, and escort the caravans.

If the Bedouins sometimes pillage those caravans, the haughty perfidious conduct of the Turkish officers is always the first cause of such hostilities. Those insolent Turks look upon all the Arabs as rebels ; that is, in the modern signification of this word, as a people who, although weak, have the audacity to withstand the oppression of their stronger neighbours. In consequence of this selfish reasoning, they violate their engagements ; and the Arabs take their revenge by pillaging the caravans.

The famous *Ali Bey*, when he conducted the Egyptian caravan to Mecca, would not pay all the duties on his way to Mecca, but promised to pay the rest, on his return, and forgot his promise. On the year following, the Arabs assembled in greater numbers, and obliged the Captain of the caravan to pay for himself and *Ali Bey* both. The Turks exclaimed against this as an act of robbery ; yet the Arabs had only done themselves justice.

The conduct of *Abdalla*, Pacha of Damascus, who commanded the Syrian caravan in 1756, was still more odious. When the Schiechs of the tribe of Harb came to meet him, to receive the stipulated toll, he gave them a friendly invitation to visit him ; but, instead of paying the toll, cut off their heads, and sent them to Constantinople, as a proof of his victory over the rebel Arabs. The stroke which those suffered by the death of  
their

their chiefs hindered them from attempting any thing in revenge, on either that or the following year : The caravans travelled in triumph to Mecca ; and the Turks boasted of the valour and prudence of Abdalla Pacha. But, in the third year, the Arabs avenged the slaughtered Schiechs, and, with an army of eighty thousand men, raised out of all the tribes, routed the Turks, and pillaged the caravan. The tribe of *Anæse*, under the command of their Schiech, distinguished themselves particularly in this expedition.

There is a certain subordination among the tribes. The petty tribes, being unable to defend themselves, place themselves under the protection of the greater, and are governed by their laws. Thus are powerful tribes formed by the union of several small tribes.

The Arabian nation are much more numerous, and wider spread, than they are generally supposed to be. They occupy countries, once cultivated and populous, whose ancient inhabitants have disappeared. The period at which these Arabian settlements were formed, cannot now be ascertained ; nor is it known whether they may not have been anterior to the reign of the Caliphs. The ancients did not distinguish accurately between different nations. The Kings of Palmyra, who have been supposed to be Jews, were more probably Arabs.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Bedouins on the confines of the Desert.*

THE most ancient and powerful tribes of this people are those which easily retire into the desert when attacked by a foreign enemy. These too have preserved the national character in its greatest purity, and have maintained their liberty unimpaired. Of this number are the following tribes, of whom I shall mention such particulars as have come to my knowledge.

The *Beni Khaled* are one of the most powerful tribes in all Arabia, on account of their conquests, their wealth, and the number of other tribes subject to them. From the desert of Nedjed, they have advanced to the sea, and have conquered the country of Lachsa, as I mentioned in the proper place. The Schiech of this tribe does not live always in the city of Lachsa, but sometimes in tents in the desert.

The tribe of *Kiab*, who inhabit north from the Persian Gulph, and of whom I have already spoken, rarely encamp; they have possessions in the province of *Susistan*, in Persia.

In this province of *Susistan*, near the principality of *Havisa*, and in the neighbourhood of the city of *Schuster*, five different considerable

able tribes of independent Bedouins. From the existence of these establishments, I should judge the authority of the Persians in this country to be precarious, and Susistan to be interspersed with desarts.

*Beni Lam*, are a great tribe between *Korne* and *Bagdad*, upon the banks of the Tigris, the Arabic name of which river, in constant use among the inhabitants of the country, is *Dids-jele*. They receive duties upon goods carried between *Basra* and *Bagdad*. These Arabs sometimes pillage caravans. The Pacha of *Bagdad* then sends troops against them, and sometimes chastises them by beheading their chiefs. But the successors of the *Schiechs*, who have been beheaded, are always as great enemies to the Turks, and as zealous to maintain their liberty, as their predecessors have been.

*Montefidsi*, or *Montefik*, are the most powerful tribe north from the desert, whether in respect to the extent of their territories, or the great number of the subaltern tribes who acknowledge their authority. They possess all the country upon both sides of the Euphrates, from *Korne* to *Ardje*.

In summer, when the grass in the desert is in a manner burnt up, the reigning *Schiech* resides at *Nahhr el Antar*, a town upon the banks of the Euphrates. In winter, they drive their



cattle to feed in the desert, and encamp in tents. The inhabitants of the villages, who apply to agriculture, and are for this reason held in contempt by the Bedouins, pay a tribute. They are poor, as must naturally be the condition of the subjects of those Schiechs who live comfortably themselves, but are not disposed to suffer their peasantry to grow rich.

The Arabs of this tribe often plunder travellers going between *Helle* and *Baфра*. The Pacha of Bagdad commonly chastises them; sometimes even deposes the reigning Schiech, and advances another prince of the same family in his room. These Arabs submit to this slight degree of dependence on the Turks, because they are unwilling to lose their establishments on the fertile banks of the Euphrates. In the late troubles of these provinces of the Ottoman empire, frequent notice was taken of this tribe, and they acted no unimportant part.

The tribe derive their name from one *Montefik*, who came from Hedsjas, and was descended from a family who were illustrious before the days of Mahomet. One thing certain is, that the descendents of this *Montefik* have been sovereigns in this country from time immemorial. They are divided into many branches; and, in my time, the reigning family consisted of one  
hun.

hundred and fifty persons, all of whom might aspire to the supreme power.

In 1765, the reigning Schiech, who was not of the eldest branch, was named *Abdallah*. The other princes of his family enjoyed, at the same time, a certain share of authority; each having his own subjects, with whom, in time of war, they all join the troops of the Schiech of Schiechs; in some districts they levy taxes and customs upon their own account.

There were named to me more than a score of inferior tribes, who live all in subjection to that of Montefik, which, of itself, is not extremely numerous. Among these subordinate tribes, are some who have others again still less considerable, dependent upon them. The Atabs call those dependent tribes *El Araye*.

All these tribes upon the confines of the desert, whose names I have mentioned, are genuine Arabs, who breed sheep and camels, and live in tents. But this description is, with more peculiar propriety, applicable to the reigning tribes; for, I believe, that some of the inferior tribes have lost their nobility, by intermixing the practice of agriculture with the habits of pastoral life.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the Bedouins of Mesopotamia.*

THE rich plains of Mesopotamia and Assyria, which were once cultivated by a populous nation, and watered by surprising efforts of human industry, are now inhabited, or rather ravaged, by wandering Arabs. As long as these fertile provinces shall remain under the government, or rather anarchy of the Turks, they must continue deserts, in which nature dies for want of the fostering care of man. A hereditary Sovereign, seated at Bagdad, and none else, might restore this country to its once flourishing state.

The Pachas, not knowing how to improve the value of these depopulated districts, and not being able to drive away the Arabs, permit them for an annual rent to cultivate those lands, or feed their flocks upon them. But that people are passionately fond of liberty, and shew by their conduct that they consider not themselves as subject to the Turkish yoke. The frequent wars, in which several of the tribes are engaged with the Pacha of Bagdad, although viewed as rebellion by the Ottoman officers, are proofs of the independence of the Arabs.

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So rich a tract of country, naturally invites its inhabitants to cultivate it. The lands between the Tigris and the Euphrates are intersected by numerous canals, and are inhabited only by tribes practising agriculture, or *Mœdan*. Such are the

*Beni Hæbkem*, a tribe situate eastward from the Euphrates, whose present Schiech is named *Fontil*, and who rules several petty tribes of husbandmen.

*Khafsaal*, a powerful tribe of husbandmen, likewise on the east side of the Euphrates. They have a great many petty tribes of Arabs, who live in villages, subject to them. One of these petty tribes comprehends five and twenty inferior tribes, and two others forty each. The tribes which practise husbandry appear therefore to be less numerous than the Bedouins, who often unite into very large bodies. The tribe of *Khafsaal* can muster two thousand cavalry, and a proportionate number of infantry. The Pacha of Bagdad has lately made war on these people, with various success. These Arabs are Shiites; and this is one motive more to set them at variance with the Turks. The reigning Schiech is named *Hammoud*, and levies customs from vessels coming up the Euphrates.

All the Arabs within the territories of the government of Bagdad are not husbandmen. South from that city are some Bedouins, who breed camels. Of these are the tribes of *Beni Temim*, and *Dafasa*, as well as some other tribes between Bagdad and Mosul. The tribe of *Al Tobad* have become very considerable, through the favour of the Pacha of Bagdad, one of whose principal officers was a near relation to the reigning Schiech. All that tract of country between Bagdad and Mosul is possessed by hordes of Bedouins; one of which, occupying the range of hills adjacent to the Tigris, lately made an attack upon the troops of the Pacha; and another, denominated *Al Buhamdan*, pillaged a caravan when I was in Mosul.

*Thay* are a great and powerful tribe of Bedouins between Merdin and Mosul. The reigning Schiech, who is of the family of *Salie*, for a small annual tribute, possesses the large and fertile plain of Assyria. Were it not for the usual Turkish policy of sowing dissention among the neighbours, the Pachas would find it impossible to maintain any shadow of authority over this tribe. But, the Pacha of Bagdad sends the *Togk*, or horse's tail, sometimes to one Schiech, sometimes to another; and thus is a constant rivalry kept up among them, which weakens their common strength. This horse's tail is not merely  
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ly an ensign of empty honour. It confers the dignity of *Beg*, with the right to the possession of the plain, which is held to be with the Turks. The deposed *Beg* quits his place of residence between *Mosul* and *Nissibin*, and retires with his partizans to the banks of the river *Khabour*, and there waits an opportunity to supplant his rival.

All travellers complain of the robberies of these Bedouins of Assyria. The restlessness and thievish disposition of these people seem to increase the farther they recede from their native deserts, and approach the country inhabited by the plundering *Kurdes* and *Turcomans*.

I was told of ten wandering tribes, *Arak Arabi*. The most considerable encamps in the environs of *Helle*; its name is *Salæd*; and its branches are spread even into the governments of Aleppo and Damascus.

An Arabian Schiech, with whom I was acquainted at Aleppo, gave me the names of eight tribes of Bedouins who live towards the head of the Euphrates, in districts comprehended within the government of the Pacha of *Orfa*. But, as he could give me no farther information concerning these tribes, I pass them by in silence.

## CHAP. V.

*Of the Bedouins of Syria.*

THE Pachas of this province have as much to do with the wandering Arabs, as the Turkish governors on the Persian frontier. It is of great consequence to the cities of Aleppo and Damascus, that their caravans, travelling to Bagdad or Basra, be suffered to pass in safety through the desert. Without escorting them with an army, the Pachas could not protect them from insult and pillage, did they not artfully contrive to employ one tribe of Arabs against the rest.

With this view, the Pacha gives the title of Emir to the most powerful Schiech in the neighbourhood. This emir is obliged to guide the caravans, to keep the other Arabs in awe, and to levy the dues from those who feed their cattle on the Pacha's grounds. As payment for his trouble, and to reimburse his expences, he receives a certain sum yearly. But the Arabs having little confidence in Turkish promises, the Pacha settles upon the Emir a number of villages, the revenues of which make up the stipulated sum. These villages were miserable enough before, but have been absolutely ruined

ruined by the precarious government of the Arabs.

Upon a calculation of the scanty revenue which the Porte derive from this part of their dominions, and the trivial rents paid by the Arabs for the liberty of ravaging whole provinces; and, on the other hand, a comparative estimate of the sums expended in maintaining that vagabond race in a specious subjection; it is plain, that they are losers by the shadow of authority which they pretend to have over the Arabs; but Ottoman vanity is pleased with the vain fancy of possessing immense territories, from which the Sultan derives no revenue, and in which his orders are not respected.

The most powerful tribe near Aleppo, are the *Mauali*, whose reigning Schiech is of the family of *El Burische*. The Pachas put sometimes one, sometimes another of the Schiechs of this family in possession of the villages and revenues belonging to the dignity of *Emir*. He whom they depose, retires commonly with his party to the banks of the Euphrates, and there awaits an opportunity to soften the new Pacha by presents, and recover his place. A few years since, an Emir foreseeing that he was to be deposed, plundered a caravan, carried away 30,000 head of cattle from the pastures about Aleppo, and conveyed his booty to a place of safety near the Eu-



phrates. Some time after, he surprised and pillaged the city of *Hæms*. It was supposed, when I was in Aleppo, that the Pacha would be obliged to recal and reinstate him in the office of Emir.

A nephew of the Emir, or reigning Schiech of the tribe of Mauali, named to me fifteen considerable tribes who inhabit the neighbourhood of Aleppo. Another Schiech, a great traveller, mentioned five others, somewhat farther distant, and near the road from Aleppo to Basra. All these Bedouins pay each a trifle to the Emir, for liberty to hire out or sell their camels, and to feed their cattle through the country. The neighbouring tribes in the *desart of salt*, who are subject to the Pacha, pay something to a farmer (of the tax) for liberty to gather the salt formed in that desart.

I was surprised to see among those tribes the tribes of *Thay* and *Sobæd*, which must of consequence be spread very widely over the country. The tribe of *Raben* boasts of its antiquity, and pretends to have come from Yemen to settle in the north, at the time when the dyke of the reservoir of the Sabæans at March was broken down.

As my stay at Damascus was very short, I could not acquire enough of information concerning the Bedouins in the government of Damascus.

muscus or Scham. I learned only the names of a dozen of their tribes, one of which named *Abu Salibe*, consists, as I was told, solely of Christians. Another, *Beni Hamjar*, pretend that they are descended from the old Arabian kings of this name.

Several circumstances lead me to presume, that, of the other nations in Syria, *Kurdes*, *Dru-ses*, *Metuacli*, *Nassaries*, and *Tschinganes*, some are of Arabian ancestry.

The tribe of *Anæse* are esteemed to be the greatest tribe in the desert of Syria. They have even spread into Nedsjed, where they are reckoned the most numerous tribe in the heart of Arabia. The caravans of Turkish pilgrims pay them a considerable duty for their free passage through the country. This tribe too, when dissatisfied, plunder the caravans. They often make war on the Pacha of Damascus. They lately routed and killed the Pacha of *Gbassa* in his own government.

In my time, the departure of a caravan from Bagdad was retarded by news received of those Arabs being on ill terms with the Pacha of Damascus. Two Turkish lords, who were very much beloved in Arabia, resolving to attend the caravan, the merchants ventured to pack up and send off their goods. But, I not choosing, after so many dangers, to expose myself anew  
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and unnecessarily, took the road from Bagdad to Mosul, and intrusted a trunk to an Arab, a camel-driver in that caravan, directing him to deliver it to a certain man at Aleppo. Within a day's journey of Damascus, the whole caravan were plundered by the tribe of *Anæse*. The trunk was opened. The Bedouins took what they chose, but left me my books, papers, a box of medals, and two watches. The camel-driver collected the broken pieces of my trunk, and brought the whole honestly to Aleppo. Thus had I, at the same time, a proof of Arabian rapacity and Arabian integrity.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the Bedouins of Arabia Petræa, and Palestine.*

THE name of *Arabia Petræa* is used in a vague manner by our geographers. It seems to be a denomination given to those countries which are mostly desert, between Egypt, Syria, and Arabia properly so called. It would be difficult to determine exactly the limits of those countries, which are little known, and but thinly inhabited; the inhabitants of which wander among dry sands and rocks, seeking here and there a few spots which afford some scanty food for  
their

their cattle. None but Bedouins haunt these deserts.

In the account of my journey to *Mount Sinai*, I spoke of three tribes whom I found settled by the highway. Those are no doubt of that class which acknowledge the superiority of a greater tribe. On the other side of that chain of mountains, and in the environs of *Akaba*, there must be other tribes, but the names of these I know not.

I have already mentioned the great tribe of *Harb*, who live to the north of *Headsjas*. In this province are also the ancient tribes of *Beni Otaba*, *Hodeil*, *Jom*, and others, which the inhabitants of Mecca call bands of robbers, seemingly for no other reason, but that their Sherriffe has frequent quarrels with those Bedouins.

There are also several considerable tribes upon the confines of Nedsjed, and the great desert. The tribe of *Beni Temim*, among these, were famous in the days of the successors of Mahomet, for a prophet named *Sedsjay*, who did honour to the tribe. *Schiech Dabber*, Master of Acca, and the greater part of Palestine, is also an Arab, but I know not to what tribe he belongs.

I could learn nothing of consequence concerning the Arabs of Palestine. They seem to be poor neglected hordes, who inhabit that barren and dismal country.

I was told of the tribe of *Dsjarhamie*, between *Rama* and Jerusalem. The European monks, who are now the only pilgrims that visit the Holy Land, describe those Arabs as devils incarnate, and complain dolefully of their cruelty to the poor Christians. Those lamentations, and the superstitious pity of good souls in Europe, procure large alms to the convent of Franciscans at Jerusalem. The exaggerated relations of the sufferings of the pilgrims, from those inhuman Bedouins, will therefore be continued as long as they can serve the purpose for which they are intended.

It must be confessed, however, that this tribe of *Dsjarhamie* form, in one instance, a remarkable exception from the ordinary national character of the Arabs, who, in general, never maltreat a stranger, unless they have first received provocation. But, those Arabs in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem have a rooted aversion to the monks; in other respects, they are honest enough people..

They convey every year, from Jafa to Jerusalem, money and goods, sent to the monks from Europe, to a considerable amount, without ever touching or embezzling the smallest article. They know that the superior of the convent at Jerusalem pays the travelling expences of the pilgrims

grims, and that they are poor monks, who have nothing to lose. Yet they wait to intercept those indigent caravans, not to pillage them, but that they may have the pleasure of venting their hatred against the monks.

It would be a gross mistake, therefore, if any European should fancy that he might travel safely through Judea, in consequence of putting himself under the protection of the monks. A young Frenchman had a trial of this when I was in that country. Passing the river Jordan, he was severely beaten by the Bedouins, solely for being found in company with the monks, which made the Arabs view him in a suspicious light.

SECT.

## SECTION XXV.

OF THE RELIGION AND CHARACTER OF THE  
ARABS.

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CHAP. I.*Of the different Sects of Mahometans in Arabia.*

It might be expected that the Mahometan religion should be preserved in its highest purity in Arabia, which was its cradle; and that no contrariety of opinions, or diversity of sects, should have arisen there. An old tradition records a saying of Mahomet's, from which he appears to have foreseen that it was impossible for his followers to remain in perpetual harmony of doctrine and worship. He is said to have predicted that his new religion should be divided into seventy different sects, as the Christians of his time were.

This prediction is in part accomplished; for there are at present several Mahometan sects in Arabia.

The doctrines and rites of the Mussulman religion are in general sufficiently known. I  
shall

I shall satisfy myself with mentioning some remarkable peculiarities which distinguish the sects established in Arabia, and which have an influence on the moral character or political state of the nation.

The most considerable sects among the Arabian Mahometans, are,

1. That of *Sunni*, to which the Turks also belong. This forms the most numerous sect in Arabia; its opinions being professed by the inhabitants of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and by the Sherriffes of those cities who are reputed the successors of Mahomet.

2. The sect of *Schya*, of which the whole Persian nation profess themselves. In the eastern parts of Arabia are some disciples of this sect; and it prevails all along the borders of the Persian Gulph. The *Metauli*, or *Mut-Ali*, in Syria, are likewise Shiites.

3. The sect of *Zcidi*, which prevails in Yemen, and of which the Imam of Sana is a follower.

4. The sect of *Beiafi*, *Beiadi*, or *Abadi*, is the principal sect in *Oman*. It is said to owe its origin to the enemies of the Caliph Ali, two of whom went into *Oman* after a defeat, which only nine of them had survived.

5. The sect of *Messalich*, of which I have already taken notice in describing the Bedouins settled between the provinces of Hedsjas and



Yemen. I suspect this rather to be a different religion, than a sect of the Mussulman.

6. The sect of *Mecrami* and *Abd ul Wabheb*. I have already given my opinion of this little known sect in the descriptions of Nedsjeran and Nedsjed.

7. The sect of *Dsjedsjal*, of which the inhabitants of *Mecran*, a maritime province of Persia, are followers.

8. Lastly, the sects of *Schabreari* and *Merdinar*, of which are the *Belludsje*, Arabian tribes on the confines of the province of Mecran, as I have above observed.

All these different sects acknowledge Mahomet their prophet, and regard the Koran as their code of civil and ecclesiastical laws. However, they mutually treat each other as *Chauaredsji* or *Rafidi*, that is to say, heretics.

The *Sunnites* allow only the four sects, which they consider as orthodox; those of *Schafei*, *Hanefi*, *Maleki*, and *Hanbali*, to have houses of prayer about the *Kaba*. The *Zeidites*, however, to make themselves amends for the exclusion they suffer, have reared for themselves an invisible house of prayer in the air, immediately over the *Kaba*, by which means they are, in their own opinion, put into possession of these sacred places. Notwithstanding these lofty pretensions, every pilgrim of this sect is obliged to pay a high

high capitation to the Sherriffe, who has, for these several years, made the Shiites likewise pay dear for permission to visit Mecca.

The Zeidites seem to be less rigid and superstitious than the Sunnites, who are much addicted to the worship of saints, and believe in the most ridiculous miracles. - The former trouble not themselves with the controversy about Mahomet's successors, which has occasioned the schism between the Sunnites and the Shiites. Nor are they so rigid and exact in respect to prayers and other ceremonies; they make no mention of saints; and the Imam of Sana, who is a Zeidite, suffers useless mosques to fall into ruins, and sometimes even demolishes them, to the great offence of his Sunnite subjects in the Tehama.

All these sects venerate the descendants of Mahomet, except the *Beiafi*, who treat them with no greater respect than other Arabs, and believe all the families in the nation to have the same right to the sovereign power.

For this reason, the Prince of Maskat, who is of the sect of *Beiafi*, takes the title of Imam, although not descended from Mahomet. This sect abstain, not only from strong liquors, like the other Mussulmans, but even from tobacco and coffee; although, out of hospitality, these are offered to strangers in Oman. The *Beiafi*  
pique

pique themselves on great austerity of manners, and simplicity in their mode of living. Even the most opulent among them avoid every thing like magnificence in their drefs, houses, and mosques. The Prince administers justice in person, and permits all his subjects to be seated in his presence. It was in consequence of this severity of manners, that the last Imam, who was a tyrannical and voluptuous prince, became odious to his subjects. In the description of Oman, I have taken notice of the revolution by which that prince was driven from the throne.

At Maskat, I received an account of the miraculous origin of the sect of *Dsjedsjal*, in the province of Mecran. Its first author was a venerable old man, who was found by some woodcutters shut up in the middle of a tree, and having a book in his hand. Each sect indeed tells ridiculous stories of the other sects to bring them into contempt.

I saw or heard of no convents of monks among the Zeidites in Yemen, or among the Beiafi in Oman. The Sunnites, and among them the Turks especially, are known to have a great number of religious orders, the members of which are distinguished by the names of *Dervises* and *Santons*, and discriminated from one another by diversities of dress and manners. At Mokha were beggars, who sang through the streets,

streets, called Dervises; as well as some other poor creatures, who, for any trifle, were ready to read the passages of the Koran inscribed on the tombstones. As the Zeidites and Beiafi are not worshippers of saints, they cannot have Dervises and Santons; who, on the other hand, are very numerous in Egypt, where they perform many extravagant fooleries.

The Turks and Persians have been almost constantly at war; and their respective Princes have generally contrived to represent to their subjects disputes which originated from their ambition, as prompted by religious considerations. This is the reason of the violent hatred with which the Shiites and Sunnites are animated against one another. In Turkey and Persia, Christians are permitted to build churches, and the Jews, synagogues; but in Persia, no Sunnite mosque is allowed; and the Turks tolerate the Shiites in the exercise of no other part of their worship, except their pilgrimage to their Prophet's tomb in the vicinity of Bagdad; and for this permission they pay very dear to the Ottoman Porte. In Yemen, the Sunnites and Zeidites live happily together; for the latter, who are the more tolerant of the two, are the predominant sect.

The Mussulmans in general do not persecute men of other religions, when they have nothing  
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to fear from them, unless in the case of an intercourse of gallantry with a Mahometan woman. A Christian, convicted of blasphemy, would also be in danger of losing his life. In such a case, it is true, a Mahometan would be little be spared. While I was at Bagdad, a Janissary urged a citizen for a debt; the latter always answered with a devout air, that he should remember God and the Prophet, and wait patiently for payment, without putting himself in a passion. The Janissary was at last provoked to utter a blasphemous expression; the artful citizen attested witnesses; and the Janissary was accordingly convicted, expelled out of his corps, and next day hanged.

All the Mussulman sects are not alike abhorers of images. In Oman, the Banians are allowed to set up their images openly in their apartments. The Sunnites even appear to have lost somewhat of their aversion for these material representations of Deity. Those in India keep paintings; and I even saw two of these in a villa of the Sultan's near Constantinople. At Kahira I found prints, and a plaster bust in the house of a learned Sunnite.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the other Religions tolerated in Arabia.*

THROUGH all Arabia are Jews, who are held in much greater contempt than the Christians. I have already mentioned the Jewish tribes settled in the neighbourhood of *Kheibar*, where they are not barely tolerated, but have the sovereign authority in their own hands.

The Jews dispersed through different cities have synagogues, and enjoy a great deal of freedom. They are fond of living together, and commonly form a village near every principal town. In Oman they are still better treated, and permitted to wear the dress of Mahometans.

The Christians were once numerous in Arabia. I know of no Christian church remaining at present in all this country. In the province of Lachsa are many Sabæans, or Christians of St John. But, the Christianity of this sect seems to be a confused medley of the opinions and ceremonies of several different religions.

Banians from India are settled in great numbers in the commercial cities. At Mokha they suffer many mortifications. But, at Mafkat, among the tolerant sect of the Beiasî, they  
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are permitted to observe the laws, and cultivate the worship of their own religion without disturbance. In Persia there are also some of these Indians; but the Turks, who are austere Sunnites, suffer none of them in their provinces.

I never saw that the Arabs have any hatred for those of a different religion. They, however, regard them with much the same contempt with which Christians look upon the Jews in Europe. Among the Arabs this contempt is regulated. It falls heaviest upon the Banians; next after them, upon the Jews; and, least of all, upon the Christians, who, in return, express the least aversion for the Mussulmans. A Mahometan, who marries a Christian or Jewish woman, does not oblige her to apostatize from her religion; but the same man would not marry a Banian female, because this Indian sect are supposed to be strangers to the knowledge of God, having no book of divine authority. The Mahometans in India appear to be even more tolerant than those of Arabia. They live in a good understanding with the Banians, and treat them with less contempt than their Arabian brethren.

This progress towards general toleration preserves the Arabs from the rage of making proselytes. They seek neither to entice nor constrain

strain any person, except sometimes their young slaves, whom they compel to embrace Mahometism : But, when a profelyte voluntarily presents himself, they are, by the laws of their religion, obliged to receive him, and even to provide for his maintenanc. The converts who most commonly offer themselves are deserters from the crews of European ships, who take this shift to escape punishment. As they are known to be mostly very bad subjects, government allows them but a very scanty pension, scarcely sufficient for their maintenance. They are not confined, either from intercourse with Christians, or from taking voyages into distant countries. We had in our service in Arabia a French renegado, who, when he left us, went to India.

It may not be improper to remark, in this place, that the Indians are still less anxious about making converts than the Arabs. The Bramins, Rajaputs, and Banians, receive nobody into their communion, but, on the contrary, expel all of their members who render themselves obnoxious by irregularity of life, and by this means afford profelytes to the Christians. Thus the European missionaries, who run so indecently through the East, and profane the sacrament of baptism, by casting it at the head of every



one, have little reason to boast of the conversions they effect, especially as they use so much importunity to accomplish them.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the Character of the Arab :*

CLIMATE, government, and education, are, undoubtedly, the great agents which form and modify the characters of nations. To the first of these the Arabs owe their vivacity, and their disposition to indolence ; the second increases their laziness, and gives them a spirit of duplicity ; the third is the cause of that formal gravity which influences the faculties of their mind, as well as their carriage and exterior aspect.

No two things can differ more than the education of the Arabs from that of the Europeans. The former strive as much to hasten the age of maturity, as the latter to retard it. The Arabs are never children ; but many Europeans continue children all their life.

In Arabia, boys remain in the Haram, among the women, till the age of five or six, and during this time follow the childish amusements suitable to their years ; but, as soon as they are removed from that scene of frivolity, they are accustomed

customed to think and speak with gravity, and to pass whole days together in their father's company, at least if he is not in a condition to retain a preceptor, who may form them. As music and dancing are esteemed indecent among the Arabs, women are also excluded from all assemblies, and the use of strong drink is forbidden. The Arabian youth are strangers to the pretended pleasures which are so eagerly pursued by the youth of Europe. The young Arabs, in consequence of being always under the eyes of persons advanced to maturity, become pensive and serious even in infancy.

Yet, under this air of gravity and recollection, the nation have in reality a great degree of vivacity in their hearts, which varies through the different provinces. The inhabitants of Yemen, living in a mild climate, and an agreeable air, have more animation in their character than those of Hedsjas and Arabia Petræa, whose imagination receives a more gloomy cast from the continual prospect of barren deserts and bare rocks. I have seen young Arabs in Yemen dance and leap, with arms in their hands, to the sound of small drums; yet, even the inhabitants of the desert, shew greater vivacity than the Turks. As for the melancholy Egyptians, I never saw them discover any mark of genuine joy, even at their festivals, however splendid.

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This vivacity in the Arabians makes them fond of company, and of large assemblies, notwithstanding their seeming seriousness. They frequent public coffee-houses, and markets, which are so numerous through Yemen, that every village, of any considerable magnitude, has a weekly market. When the villages lie at too great a distance, the country people meet in the open fields, some to buy or sell, and others to converse, or amuse themselves as spectators of the busy scene. Artisans travel through the whole week from town to town, and work at their trade in the different markets. From this fondness of theirs for society, it may be inferred, that the nation are more civilized than they are commonly supposed to be.

Several travellers accuse them of being cheats, thieves, and hypocrites. An arbitrary government, which impoverishes its subjects by extortion, can have no favourable influence indeed upon the probity of the nation; yet, I can say, from my own experience, that the accusations laid against them have been exaggerated above the facts. The Arabs themselves allow that their countrymen are not all honest men. I have heard them praise the fidelity with which the Europeans fulfil their promises, and express high indignation against the knavery of their  
own

own nation, as a disgrace to the Musulman name.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Vengeance of the Arabs.*

A L I V E L Y, animated people, of quick and violent passions, are naturally led to carry the desire of vengeance for injuries to its highest excess. The vindictive spirit of the Arabs, which is common to them with the other inhabitants of hot climates, varies, however, with the varying modifications of the national character.

The Arabs are not quarrelsome; but, when any dispute happens to arise among them, they make a great deal of noise. I have seen some of them, however, who, although armed with poignards, and ready to stab one another, were easily appeased. A reconciliation was instantly effected, if any indifferent person but said to them, Think of God and his Prophet. When the contest could not be settled at once, umpires were chosen, to whose decision they submitted.

The inhabitants of the East in general strive to master their anger. A boatman from Mas-

kat complained to the governor of the city of a merchant who would not pay a freight due for the carriage of his goods. The governor always put off hearing him, till some other time. At last the plaintiff told his case coolly, and the governor immediately did him justice, saying, I refused to hear you before, because you were intoxicated with anger, the most dangerous of all intoxications.

Notwithstanding this coolness, on which the people of the East pique themselves, the Arabs shew great sensibility to every thing that can be construed into an injury. If one man should happen to spit beside another, the latter will not fail to avenge himself of the imaginary insult. In a caravan I once saw an Arab highly offended at a man, who, in spitting, had accidentally bespattered his beard with some small part of the spittle. It was with difficulty that he could be appeased by him, who, he imagined, had offended him, even although he humbly asked pardon, and kissed his beard in token of submission. They are less ready to be offended by reproachful language, which is, besides, more in use with the lower people than among the higher classes.

But the most irritable of all men are the noble Bedouins, who, in their martial spirit, seem to carry those same prejudices farther than even  
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the barbarous warriors who issued from the North, and overran Europe. Bedouin honour is still more delicate than ours, and requires even a greater number of victims to be sacrificed to it. If one Schiech says to another, with a serious air, ‘Thy bonnet is dirty,’ or, ‘The wrong side of thy turban is out,’ nothing but blood can wash away the reproach; and not merely the blood of the offender, but that also of all the males of his family.

At Barra I heard the story of an adventure, which had happened about a dozen of years since, in the neighbourhood of that city, and which may afford an idea of the excess to which the spirit of revenge often rises among this nation. A man of eminence, belonging to the tribe of *Montefidfi*, had given his daughter in marriage to an Arab of the tribe of *Korne*. Shortly after the marriage, a Schiech of an inferior tribe asked him, in a coffee-house, Whether he were father to the handsome young wife of such a one, whom he named? The father, supposing his daughter’s honour ruined, immediately left the company to stab her. At his return from the execution of this inhuman deed, he who had so indiscreetly put the question was gone. Breathing nothing now but vengeance, he sought him every where; and not finding him, killed in the mean time several of his relations,

relations, without sparing even his cattle or servants. The offender offered the governor of Korne a great sum if he would rid him of so furious an adversary. The governor sent for him who had been offended, and endeavoured by threats, and a shew of the apparatus of punishment, to force him to a reconciliation; but the vengeful Arab would rather meet death than forego his revenge. Then the governor, to preserve a man of such high honour, soothed him to an agreement, by which the first aggressor gave his daughter, with a handsome portion, in marriage to him whom he had offended. But the father-in-law durst never after appear before his son-in-law.

The thirst for vengeance discovers itself likewise in the peculiar manner in which murder is prosecuted here. In the high country of Yemen, the supreme court of Sana commonly prosecutes murders in the mode usual in other countries; but, in several districts in Arabia, the relations of the deceased have leave either to accept a composition in money, or to require the murderer to surrender himself to justice, or even to wreak their vengeance upon his whole family. In many places, it is reckoned unlawful to take money for the shedding of blood, which, by the laws of Arabian honour, can be expiated only by blood. They think  
little

little of making an affassin be punished, or even put to death, by the hand of justice; for this would be to deliver a family from an unworthy member, who deserved no such favour at their hands.

For these reasons, the Arabs rather revenge themselves, as law allows, upon the family of the murderer, and seek an opportunity of slaying its head, or most considerable person, whom they regard as being properly the person guilty of the crime, as it must have been committed through his negligence in watching over the conduct of those under his inspection. In the mean time, the judges seize the murderer, and detain him till he has paid a fine of two hundred crowns. Had it not been for this fine, so absurd a law must have been long since repealed. From this time, the two families are in continual fears, till some one or other of the murderer's family be slain. No reconciliation can take place between them, and the quarrel is still occasionally renewed. There have been instances of such family feuds lasting forty years. If, in the contest, a man of the murdered person's family happens to fall, there can be no peace till two others of the murderer's family have been slain.

This detestable custom is so expressly forbidden in the Koran, that I should not have been



persuaded of its existence, had I not seen instances of it. Men, indeed, act every where in direct contradiction to the principles of religion; and this species of revenge is not merely impious, but even absurd and inhuman. An Arabian of distinction, who often visited us at Lohaya, always wore, even when he was in company, both his poignard and a small lance. The reason of this, he told us, was, that a man of his family had been murdered, and he was obliged to avenge the murder upon a man of the inimical family, who was then actually in the city, and carried just such another lance. He acknowledged to us, that the fear of meeting his enemy, and fighting with him, often disturbed his sleep. In the narrative of my journey from Beit el Fakih to Mokha, I have related an instance of a family feud of this kind, in the country through which we passed.

Among the Bedouins in the East of Arabia, every family strive to right themselves, whenever they think that they have suffered an injury. When the two hostile families happen to belong to two powerful rival tribes, formal wars sometimes follow in consequence of such accidental quarrels: But, on the other hand, the public peace is not at all interrupted by a private feud, when the persons at variance belong to two petty tribes, both subject to the same  
great

great tribe. Lastly, when the two contending parties are subjects of the same Schiech, and are, of consequence, held to be of the same family, the Schiech and the principal subjects join to reconcile the parties, and to punish the murderer.

The tribes upon the confines of Oman, and the shores of the Persian gulph, are also acquainted with these family wars, and more harassed even than the Arabians by them. A great part of these tribes earn their subsistence by carrying coffee from Yemen to the Persian gulph, and by the pearl fishery; and, from this circumstance, parties at variance have more frequent opportunities of meeting and fighting at sea. Weak tribes are thus often obliged to quit their way of life, and fall into obscurity and misery (P).

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Arabian Nobility.*

THE Arabs are accused of being vain, full of prejudices with respect to birth, and ridiculously attentive to records of genealogy, which they keep even for their horses. This reproach cannot affect the great body of the nation, who  
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know not their family names, and take not the trouble of keeping a register of births. Most of those, even in the middle station of life, know not who were their grandfathers, and would often be as much at a loss to know their fathers, if it were not regulated by custom, that the son shall join his father's name with his own.

All those petty princes who govern in Arabia are, undoubtedly, very proud of their birth, and with some reason, since their families have, from time immemorial, enjoyed independence and sovereign power. The nobility, who are free, or dependent only on the chiefs of their tribes, are equally so. They enjoy privileges which the traditional history of the nation represents as having always belonged to certain families. The Schiechs are excusable, therefore, although they value themselves upon advantages which are peculiarly theirs.

What adds to the high conceit the Bedouin Schiechs have of their nobility, is its being incommunicable, and not to be conferred by any sovereign prince, or even by the Caliphs. As it is founded on the customs of a pastoral people, who know no distinction of rank, but that of the heads of families, no sovereign can augment the number of these chiefs. Nobles can be created only in countries where the nobility  
forms

form a distinct class, enjoying certain civil privileges, which may be equally conferred on others. The Bedouin nobility may be compared to the chiefs of the clans among the Scotch highlanders, who are in a very similar condition with respect to their honours and authority (Q).

The descendants of Mahomet hold, with some reason, the first rank among the great families in Arabia. Mahomet was sprung from one of the noblest families in the country, and rose to the rank of a potent prince. His first profession of a dealer in camels, proves him to have been a Schiech of the genuine and pure nobility of his nation. It may be inferred, however, from the singular veneration in which his family are held, that religious opinions have contributed to gain them the pre-eminence which they hold, above even the most ancient sovereign houses. A sect naturally respect the posterity of their founder, as a race bearing an indelible character of sanctity.

These descendants of Mahomet have received different titles. In Arabia they are called Sheriffes, or *Sejids*; in the Mahometan countries situate northward, Sherriffes or Emirs; and in the Arabian colonies in the East, simply *Sejids*. The prince of *Havisa*, on the frontiers of Persia, takes the title of *Maula*, which has, I believe, been also assumed by the Emperor of Morocco.

Morocco. In some countries, this family are distinguished by a green turban. Nay, on the coasts of Arabia, ships hoist a green flag, when fitted out by a Sejid. Yet the green turban is not invariably a distinctive mark of a descendent of Mahomet. Beggars sometimes wear turbans of this colour ; and one of our servants did the same, and was blamed by nobody.

The Sherriffes of Hedsjas are esteemed the noblest of Mahomet's descendents, because they have made fewer intermarriages with strangers than the rest of the Prophet's posterity. In that province, they are treated with almost incredible respect. A Sherriffe may venture into the midst of a fray, without the smallest fear of being intentionally hurt or killed. He needs not to shut his doors against thieves. In the Ottoman provinces, the family of the Prophet are less regarded. In my time, a Sejid, who had been guilty of divers crimes, and although warned and reproved by an indulgent governor, had not corrected his bad habits, was condemned to suffer capital punishment.

Having heard a distinction frequently made between a Sherriffe and a Sejid, I made inquiry into its nature. I learned that Sherriffes are constantly devoted to a military life, and are descended from *Hassan* ; but that the Sejids are the posterity of *Hosseïn*, and follow the pursuits

puruits of trade and science, although they have sometimes risen to fovereign power in foinc parts of Arabia.

There are, in all Mahometan countries, an astonishing number of Sherriffes. I saw whole villages peopled with this family solely. To those who know not in what manner this title is transmitted, the numbers of those who enjoy this high rank must undoubtedly appear surprising; but polygamy naturally multiplies families, till many of their branches sink into the most wretched misery. In my account of *Jebid*, I have mentioned my acquaintance with a Sherriffe in that city, who was in extreme poverty. A peculiar custom tends to the farther increase of the race of Sherriffes. The son of a woman of the family of Mahomet is esteemed a Sherriffe, and transmits the honour to all his posterity. I travelled through Natolia with a Turk, who was called simply *Achmed*, and wore the common turban, while his son was honoured with a green turban, and with the title of Sherriffe, because his mother was a *Sherriffa*. Other similar instances came within my knowledge in the provinces of Turkey; and, from various circumstances, I was led to infer, that many persons enjoy this title who are not at all connected with the Prophet's family. The genuine Sherriffes, to strengthen their party against the Caliphs,

liphs, have acknowledged kindred with various powerful families who were entire strangers to them.

In Turkey, where the Sherriffes are not numerous, they enjoy various privileges, and, among others, that of being subject, in every considerable town, not to the Pacha, but to a man of their own family, who is denominated *Nakib*, or general of the Sherriffes. The Turkish government seems, however, to be suspicious of their ambition, and never intrusts them with any public office. They are commonly called *Emirs*; an indeterminate title, which is bestowed equally upon persons of the highest quality, and upon subordinate officers.

Of all the titles in use among the Arabian nobility, the most ancient and most common is that of *Schieh*. The Arabian language, which is in other respects so rich, is however poor in terms expressive of the distinctions of rank. The word *Schieh* has, in consequence of this circumstance, various significations. Sometimes it is the title of a prince or noble; at other times, it is given to a professor in an academy, to a man belonging to a mosque, to the descendant of a saint, to the mayor of a town, and in Oman, even to the chief of the Jewish synagogue. Although thus seemingly prostituted, yet is not this title despised by the great. A  
Schiech

Schiech of an ancient Arabian family would not change the name for that of *Sultan*, which has been assumed by some petty princes in the highlands of Hadramaut and Jafa.

The Schiechs of illustrious families among the Bedouins have reason for considering their genealogy as a matter of some consequence. Some of them are descended from ancestors who were princes before the days of Mahomet, and the first Caliphs. As it would be difficult, among a people who have no public registers or historians, to make out regular tables of genealogies reaching farther than ten centuries backwards, the Arabians have contrived a compendious mode of verifying their lines of descent. From among their later ancestors, they select some illustrious man from whom they are universally allowed to be descended. This great man, again, is as universally allowed to be descended from some other great man; and thus they proceed backwards to the founder of the family. The Sherriffes and Sejids, by the same expedient, prove the origin of their family to have been with Mahomet, and thus abbreviate their genealogy, without rendering it doubtful.

Beside these Schiechs and princes, there are, at Mecca, some families not less concerned to



preserve their genealogies, with all possible exactitude. These are the families descended from the tribe of *Koraisch*, which have held certain employments, by hereditary right, since the days of Mahomet and his first successors. Their employments are, *1st*, the office of keeper of the key of the *Kaba*, which was conferred by Mahomet on the family of *Othman ibn Talha* : *2d*, That of Mufti of the sect of *Schafei* : *3d*, That of Mufti of the sect of *Hanbali* ; and, *lastly*, That of a learned *Schech* to attend in the holy mosque.

There are also, in Mecca, twelve other families, descended from the illustrious tribe of *Koraisch*. If any where in the world, a faithful list of genealogy, for more than ten centuries, may be found, it is certainly among these families of *Koraischites*, who are constantly obliged to prove the genuineness of their descent, in order to preserve their envied privileges.

I never heard the distinction between the genuine and naturalized Arabs formally explained. Such a distinction is made, however ; for the Bedouins value themselves so much on the purity of their descent, that they look very contemptuously on the Arabs who live in cities, as a race debased by their intermixture with other nations. No Schiech will marry the daughter of

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of a citizen, unless he happen to be driven by poverty to contract so unequal an alliance. At Bagdad I saw a Schiech of eminence from the desert, who, from motives of this nature, had married the daughter of the Musli of that city.

The Arabs seem still to have a vanity in the use of those long names which are so disgusting in their history; but this length of names and titles is occasioned by the difficulty of distinguishing individuals among a nation who know not the use of family names. Thus an Arab named Ali, if his father's name was *Mohammed*, takes the name of *Ali Ibn Mohammed*; if from Basra, he adds the name of his country, *el Basri*; and, if a man of letters, the name of his sect, as *Schafei*; and his name at length will thus be, *Ali Ibn Mohammed el Basri el Schafei*; so that he cannot be confounded with any other of his countrymen. An illustrious man never takes these long names in his lifetime, but has all this pomp of epithets conferred on him after his death.

Some men, whose fathers have not been much known, adjoin to their own names that of their eldest son. A Turk of the name of *Salech*, who furnished me for hire with mules to perform the journey from Aleppo to Konia, called himself

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*Fatime Ugli*, the son of *Fatime*. I asked several Turks, if it were common among them to take the name of the mother. They replied, that there were some instances of it, but that no man in his senses would name himself after a woman.

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## SECTION XXVI.

OF THE MANNERS AND USAGES OF THE  
ARABIANS.

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### CHAP. I.

*Of Marriage among the Arabians.*

THE Europeans are mistaken in thinking the state of marriage so different among the Mussulmans from what it is with Christian nations. I could not discern any such difference in Arabia. The women of that country seem to be as free and happy as those of Europe can possibly be.

Polygamy

Polygamy is permitted, indeed, among Mahometans, and the delicacy of our ladies is shocked at this idea; but the Arabians rarely avail themselves of the privilege of marrying four lawful wives, and entertaining at the same time any number of female slaves. None but rich voluptuaries marry so many wives, and their conduct is blamed by all sober men. Men of sense, indeed, think this privilege rather troublesome than convenient. A husband is, by law, obliged to treat his wives suitably to their condition, and to dispense his favours among them with perfect equality: But these are duties not a little disagreeable to most Mussulmans; and such modes of luxury are too expensive to the Arabians, who are seldom in easy circumstances. I must, however, except one case; for it sometimes happens that a man marries a number of wives in the way of a commercial speculation. I knew a *Mullah*, in a town near the Euphrates, who had married four wives, and was supported by the profits of their labour.

Divorce, the idea of which is also regarded as horrid by the fair sex in Europe, is not nearly so common as is imagined in the East. The Arabians never exercise the right of repudiating a wife, unless urged by the strongest reasons; because this is considered a dishonourable step, by persons who value their reputation, and  
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throws disgrace on the woman and her relations. Wives are entitled to demand a divorce when they think themselves ill used by their husbands. Only profligate and impudent men, who have married without consideration, will divorce their wives for slight causes.

An Arabian, in moderate circumstances, seldom marries more than one wife. And even the most considerable persons in the nation are often contented with one for life. Rich men, who are in a condition to maintain as many wives as they please, have often confessed to me, that although they had begun to live with several wives, they had at last found that they could be happy only with one.

The Arabian women enjoy a great deal of liberty, and often a great deal of power, in their families. They continue mistresses of their dowries, and of the annual income which these afford, during their marriage; and, in the case of divorce, all their own property is reserved to them. Hence it happens, that when a man in narrow circumstances marries a woman of fortune, he is entirely dependent on his wife, and dares not divorce her.

It is absurd to say, as some travellers have, that the Mahometan wives are all slaves, and so entirely the property of their husbands, that they are even inherited by his heirs. In this representation,

representation, slaves purchased with money have been confounded with women of free estate, who dispose of themselves in the East just as in Europe.

The opinion, that women are slaves in Arabia, seems to have arisen from the mistaken notion, that fathers there sell their daughters to the highest bidder. It many times happens, no doubt, that a poor man, who has an handsome daughter, is pleased to match her with a rich man, from whom he may receive occasional presents. And rich voluptuaries, who choose to marry more wives than one, are obliged to take young women of low condition, who are compelled by interested parents, or seduced by splendour, to accept a husband who associates them with other wives, and at length divorces them.

Instead of selling his daughter, every man, in tolerably easy circumstances, strives to give her a dowry, which may continue her own property. The marriage is made out by the Cadi, and signed in his presence; and in it not only is her dowry secured to the wife, but also a separate maintenance, in case of a divorce. The rich often give their daughters, in preference, to poor men, and consider their children as more likely to be happy, when thus settled, than if they were married to rich men. The wife is then mistress of all the property, and even of  
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the house of her husband, and is not in danger of being sent away.

Many ridiculous stories have been told of the marks of virginity which an Arab expects when he marries a young woman. But most of these stories greatly exaggerate the truth. The Bedouins, and the highlanders of Yemen, a rude and almost savage race, do indeed regard the want of those marks as a proof of dishonour, and think themselves obliged to send a woman back to her relations, when her chastity cannot be thus evinced. But the inhabitants of the towns, being more civilized, never concern themselves about such a trifle; only, in case of such an accident, a son-in-law forces an addition to the dowry from his father-in-law, by threatening to send his daughter home again, although he never actually does so. At Basra I heard of a single instance of divorce upon this ground, and the man was of the lowest class of the people.

Many superstitious observances, respecting marriage, still prevail in Arabia. The Arabs still believe in the virtue of enchantments, and in the art of tying and untying the knots of fate. The miserable victim of this diabolical art addresses some physician, or some old woman; for the old women are always skilled in sorcery. The Christians of the East have a still more certain

certain remedy against the effects of witchcraft. They say masses for the person afflicted; and when, at last, the imagination of the poor patient has had time to recover, the honour of the cure is always ascribed to the powerful influence of the masses.

We imagine in Europe, that the inhabitants of the East keep Eunuchs for the guardians of their harems; yet Eunuchs are not common through the East, and in Arabia there are none. The Turkish Monarch keeps more Eunuchs in his seraglio at Constantinople than are in all the rest of his dominions. The Pacha of Aleppo had two, and he of Mosul one, whom he kept, because he had belonged to his father. It is wrong, therefore, to regard Arabia as the seat of Eunuchism. They are brought from Upper Egypt, but are mostly natives of the interior and little known provinces of Africa. The Arabians abhor the cruel operation which is requisite to render a man a fit guardian of the chastity of a harem.

Eunuchs born in a climate which has a tendency to inflame the blood, are not absolutely void of all passion for the fair sex. On the sea, between Suez and Jedda, I met with a Eunuch who travelled with his seraglio; and at Basra I heard of another rich Eunuch, who kept female slaves for his private amusement.



Much has been said in Europe concerning the origin of the practice of polygamy, so generally prevalent through the East. Supposing that the plurality of wives is not barely allowed by law, but takes place in fact, some of our philosophers have imagined, that, in hot countries, more women than men are born; but I have already stated, that some nations avail not themselves of the permission given by the Mussulman law for one man to marry several wives. It would be unfair to judge of the manners of a whole people by the fastidious luxury of the great. It is vanity that fills seraglios, and that chiefly with slaves, most of whom are only slaves to a few favourite women. The number of female servants in Europe, who are, in the same manner, condemned in a great measure to celibacy, is equal or superior to that of those who are confined in the harems of the East.

It is true, that European clergymen and physicians settled in the East have presumed that rather more girls than boys are born here. I obtained some lists of Christian baptisms in the East; but some of those were filled with inconsistencies; and, in the others, the number by which the females born exceeded the males was indeed very trifling. I have reason, therefore, to conclude, that the proportion between the male and the female births is the same here as elsewhere.

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This proportion varies sometimes in Europe, as is proved by a recent instance of a town in England, in which, for some part of this century, more girls than boys have been born.

There are, it must be allowed, a good many Mahometans, who marry more wives than one, and at the same time keep female slaves ; but to supply ~~these men's~~ harams a surplus of females is not necessary. Different accidents carry off a number of men, and those accidents are such as the women are not exposed to. In the East, women are more impatient for marriage than in Europe. According to the ideas of Eastern manners, nothing is more disgraceful to a woman than to remain barren. Conscience obliges the women of those regions to desire that they may become mothers. A woman will, therefore, rather marry a poor man, or become second wife to a man already married, than remain in a state of celibacy. I have mentioned the instance of the poor Mullah, who married four wives, and lived by the profits of their labour. The men are equally disposed to marry, because their wives, instead of being expensive, are rather profitable to them. Nothing is more rarely to be met with in the East, than a woman unmarried after a certain time of life.

The Shiites are, by their law, permitted to live for a certain time, by agreement, but without

out a formal marriage, with a free Mahometan woman. The Persians frequently avail themselves of this permission; but the more rigid Sunnites think this an illicit connection, and do not tolerate it. In Turkey, a man who should cohabit with a free woman, without being married to her, would be punished by law.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Domestic Life of the Arabs.*

ARABIA affords no elegant or splendid apartments for the admiration of the traveller. The houses are built of stone, and have always terrace roofs. Those occupied by the lower people are small huts, having a round roof, and covered with a certain herb. The huts of the Arabs on the banks of the Euphrates are formed of branches of the date tree, and have a round roof covered with rush mats. The tents of the *Bedouins* are like those of the *Kurdes* and *Turcomans*. They have the aspect of a tattered hut. I have formerly remarked, that they are formed of coarse stuffs prepared by the women.

The palaces and houses of Arabians of rank display no exterior magnificence. Ornaments  
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are not to be expected in the apartments of ~~men~~ who are strangers to all luxury, except what consists in the number and the value of the horses, servants, and arms which they keep. The poor spread their floors with straw mats, and the rich with fine carpets. No person even enters ~~a room~~, without having first put off his shoes. A Frenchman boasts of having maintained the honour of his nation, by wearing his shoes in the governor of Mecca's hall of audience. It is just such another boast, as if an Arabian envoy should vaunt of trampling on the chairs of an European Lord.

The men of every family always occupy the fore part of the house, and the women the back part. If the apartments of the men are plain, those of the women are, on the contrary, most studiously set off with decorations. Of this I saw a specimen in a haram, which was nearly finished for a man of rank. One room in it was wholly covered over with mirrors; the roof, the walls, the doors, the pillars, presented all so many looking glasses. The floor was to be set with sofas, and spread with carpets.

Arabians, in circumstances which admit not of their having separate apartments for the females of the family, are careful, whenever they carry a stranger into the house, to enter before him, and cry *Tarik*, retire. Upon this notice,  
given

given by the master of the house, the women instantly disappear, and even his very best friends see not one of them. A man must, indeed, deny himself this sight; for it is reckoned highly impolite to salute a woman, or even to look her stedfastly in the face. To avoid receiving strangers in their houses, shopkeepers and artisans expose their wares, and follow their respective trades, in the open streets.

The retired life of the women disposes them to behave respectfully to the other sex. I met a Bedouin lady, who, purely out of respect, left the road, and turned her back upon me; and I saw her do the same to other men. I several times have seen women kiss the hands of a man of distinction, or kneel to kiss his feet.

The great often have in their halls basons with *jets d'eau*, to cool the air. I have mentioned that which we saw in the Imam of Sana's hall of audience. The edges of the bason were coated with marble, and the rest of the floor was covered with rich carpets.

As the people of the East wish to keep their floors very clean, they spit very little, although they smoke a great deal. Yet to spit is not reckoned a piece of impoliteness. I have seen some persons of rank use a spitting-box, and others spit on the bottom of the wall, behind the cushions on which they sat.

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As the floors are spread with carpets, and cushions are laid round the walls, one cannot sit down, without inconvenience, on the ground; and the use of chairs is unknown in the East. The Arabians practise several different modes of sitting. When, they wish to be very much at their ease, they cross their legs under the body. I found indeed, by experience, that this mode of sitting is the most commodious for people who wear long clothes, and wide breeches, without any confining ligatures. It seems to afford better rest, after fatigue, than our posture of sitting upon chairs. In presence of superiors, an Arab sits with his two knees touching each other, and with the weight of the body resting upon the heels. As in this position a person occupies less room than in the other, this is the posture in which they usually place themselves at table. I often tried it, but found it extremely uneasy, and could never accustom myself to it. In many parts of Arabia, there are long, low chairs, made of straw mats; but they sit cross-legged on them, as well as on the carpets.

The life which the Arabians lead in their houses, is so vacant and unvaried, that they cannot help feeling it irksome. Their natural vivacity prompts them to seek amusements out of doors. They frequent coffee-houses and markets, and are fond of assembling in public meetings

ings as often as possible. Yet they have not the same means of diversion as other nations. What I have formerly said concerning the amusements of the inhabitants of the East, respects the Arabians only in part. They are often obliged to take up with ~~sedentary~~ and domestic amusements, which to Europeans appear very insipid.

It is, no doubt, to divert the tedium of a sedentary life, that the people of the East make so much use of tobacco. The Arabians, notwithstanding the natural dryness of their constitution, and the warmth of their climate, smoke still more than the inhabitants of the northern provinces of Asia. They use the long Persian pipe, which I have already described. A custom peculiar to Arabia, is, that persons of opulence and fashion carry always about them a box filled with odoriferous wood. They put a bit of this wood into any person's pipe, to whom they wish to express particular respect; and it communicates to the tobacco a fragrant smell, and a very agreeable taste.

I never saw the Arabians use opium, like the Turks and the Persians. Instead of taking this gratification, they constantly chew *Kaad*. This is the buds of a certain tree, which are brought in small boxes from the hills of Yemen. Persons who have good teeth chew these buds just

as they come from the tree : For the use of old men it is first brayed in a mortar. It seems to be from fashion merely that these buds are chewed ; for they have a disagreeable taste ; nor could we accustom ourselves to them. I found likewise that Kaad has a parching effect upon the constitution, and is unfavourable to sleep.

The lower people are fond of raising their spirits to a state of intoxication. As they have no strong drink, they, for this purpose, smoke *Hafchisch*, which is the dried leaves of a sort of hemp. This smoke exalts their courage, and throws them into a state in which delightful visions dance before the imagination. One of our Arabian servants, after smoking *Hafchisch*, met with four foldiers in the street, and attacked the whole party. One of the foldiers gave him a sound beating, and brought him home to us. Notwithstanding his mishap, he would not make himself easy, but still imagined, such was the effect of his intoxication, that he was a match for any four men.



## CHAP. III.

*Of the Food of the Arabians, and their Manner of Eating.*

As the people of the East squat themselves upon the ground when they sit, so their manner of eating at meals is conformable to this way of sitting. They spread a large cloth in the middle of the room, put upon this cloth a small table only one foot high, and upon the table a large round plate of tinned copper. Upon this are set different copper dishes, neatly tinned within and without. Instead of table napkins, Arabians of rank use a long linen cloth, which those at table put under their knees. Where this linen cloth is wanting, every one uses a small handkerchief of his own. They use no knives nor forks. The Turks have sometimes wooden or horn spoons; but the Arabians use their fingers with great dexterity, and eat all dishes with the hand.

Were we to judge them by the standard of our own manners, the people of the East behave very indecently at an European table. I could not help being much struck by the behaviour of the first Turk I saw eat, who was the comptroller of the customs of the Dardanelles, in company with

with whom I happened to sup at the French Consul's table. That Turk tore his meat in pieces with his fingers, and wiped them with his napkin. My surprise at this mode of eating ceased when I became more familiar with the manners of those people. They know not the use of table napkins, and suppose them to be handkerchiefs, with which they are to wipe themselves. They are much at a loss when a piece of meat is to be cut; for they think it indecent to make use of the left hand in cutting it, as with it they perform their ablutions. They manage better when the meats are, after their own fashion, cut into small bits, before being set down on the table. We, Europeans, were at first shocked to see so many hands in the dish together. But, as the Mahometans are obliged, by the laws of their religion, to pay the utmost attention to personal cleanliness, and are habituated to it, there is in reality little difference, in point of delicacy, between their mode of eating and ours.

The more eminent Schiechs in the desert eat of nothing but *Pilau*, or boiled rice. It is served up in a very large wooden plate. The company sit down and eat, one after another, till the whole contents of the plate be exhausted, or they are satisfied. . In the houses of persons of distinction in the towns, several of these plates  
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are set, one upon another, in a pyramidical form. When the masters rise, the servants sit down at the same table, and eat up what remains.

The meal was served up in a different style at *Merdin*, where I dined with fifteen of the *Waiwoode's* officers. A servant stood in the middle of the company, to set down and remove the dishes which were brought in by the other servants. Hardly was a plate set down upon the table, when sixteen hands were thrust into it, all at once, and soon emptied it of its contents, especially when this was pastry, which the inhabitants of the East, whose drink is water, are passionately fond of. They eat with amazing quickness in the East. At *Merdin* we emptied more than fourteen plates within less than twenty minutes.

The Muffulmans in general, and particularly the Arabs, repeat always a short prayer before sitting down to a meal, "In the name of the most merciful God." When any one has done eating, he rises, without waiting for the rest, and says, "God be praised." They drink little while they eat; but, as they rise from the table, after washing, they drink some cold water, and a cup of coffee.

The Arabians, in the eastern part of this country, are not less fond than the Turks of coffee,

coffee, which they also call *Kabwe*. They prepare it in the manner which we have adopted from them. The only difference, between their mode of preparing it and ours, is, that they, instead of grinding their coffee-beans, pound them in a mortar. We carried a coffee-mill with us into Arabia, but soon found the taste of the pounded coffee much superior to that of the ground, and left off using our mill. The pounding seems better to express the oily parts of the bean, which give the coffee its peculiar relish. The people of the East always drink their coffee without either milk or sugar.

It is odd enough that, in Yemen, the proper country of which the coffee plant is a native, there should be so little coffee drunk. It is there called *Bunn*, and is supposed to have heating effects upon the blood. The favourite drink of the Arabians of this province is prepared from the husks of coffee-beans, slightly roasted, and pounded. It is called *Kabwe*, or more commonly *Kischer*. It tastes like tea, and is thought refreshing. People of distinction drink it out of porcelain cups, and the lower sort out of cups of coarse earthen ware.

Although the Mussulmans are forbidden the use of all intoxicating liquors, yet many of them are passionately fond of these, and drink them privately, and at night, in their own houses.

houses. Our physician saw, in the house of a rich merchant at Loheia, all the necessary instruments for distilling brandy. On the frontiers of Arabia, where there are Christians, both wine and spiritous liquors are to be found ; but in Arabia, none of these are to be obtained, except from the Jews of Sana, who have great plenty, and that of excellent quality. They supply their countrymen ; but, having no casks, they are obliged to carry their wine and brandy in copper vessels, which renders the use of them dangerous to the health. The English, too, sometimes bring *Arrack* from India to Mokha.

At Lohcya, we bought a sort of wine, prepared from an infusion of dry grapes in water, in a pot which is buried in the ground, to make the liquor ferment. We had also offered to us a thick, white liquor, called *Busa*, which is prepared from meal mixed with water, and brought into a state of fermentation. It is used at Basra, and is still more common in Armenia, where the inhabitants keep it in large earthen pots, half buried in the ground, and draw it out for use by the insertion of reeds. A proof of the permanency of national customs is, that Xenophon found this same liquor used in Armenia, and preserved in this very manner (R).

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The Arabians are, in general, a sober, frugal nation, which is probably the cause of their leanness, and seemingly stunted growth. Their usual articles of food are rice, pulse, milk, butter, and *Keimakh*, or whipped cream. They are not without animal food; but they seldom eat of it; for it is thought very unwholesome in these hot countries. Mutton is the most common species of animal food used here; and on it the Arabians of the desert chiefly live. As the castration of animals, though not forbidden by the Mussulman law, is little practised here, wedder-mutton is never used by the Arabians.

The common people in Arabia have little other food, but bad bread made of *Durra*, a sort of coarse millet, by kneading it with camel's milk, oil, butter, or grease. I could not eat of this bread at first, and would have preferred to it the worst bread I had ever eaten in Europe; but the people of the country, being accustomed to it, prefer it to barley bread, which they think too light.

The modes of baking bread are different in different places of Arabia. In the ship in which we sailed from Jidda to Loheya, there was a sail-lor, whose task every afternoon was to prepare *Durra* for next day's bread. He broke and bruised the grain between two stones, one of  
which

which was convex, the other concave. Of the meal thus prepared, he formed dough, and then divided it into small cakes. In the meantime, the oven was heated; but it was simply an earthen pot glazed; and a fire of charcoal was kindled up within it. When the oven was sufficiently heated, the cakes were laid against the sides of the pot, without removing the coals, and in a few moments the bread was taken up half-roasted, and was eaten hot.

The Arabians of the desert use a heated plate of iron, or a gridiron, in preparing their cakes. When they have no gridiron, they roll their dough into balls, and put it either among live coals, or into a fire of camels dung, where they cover it till it is penetrated by the heat. They then remove the ashes, and eat the bread, while it is scarcely dry, and still hot. In the towns, the Arabians have ovens like ours; their bread is of barley-meal, and of the form and thickness of our pancakes; but they never give it enough of the fire.

It is singular that the Arabs, who are no strangers to the invention of mills, should still continue the old and troublesome practice of bruising their grain with stones, without machinery. But I suspect that they find bread made of meal prepared in this way to taste more agreeably than that which is made of meal that  
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has been ground in a mill. The negroes, of certain countries in Africa, are said to prefer the mode of bruising their maize upon a stone, even after they have lived long among Europeans.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Dresses and Fashions of the Arabians.*

WHEN speaking of the dress of the inhabitants of the East in general, I communicated some idea of the dresses used by the Arabians. I described the dress of people of distinction in Yemen, when I had occasion to mention the dress of ceremony with which I was favoured by the Imam of Sana. But there is a great variety in the national dresses of the Arabians, and various fashions prevail among them, which I must not leave unnoticed.

Nothing can be more inconvenient or expensive than the head-dress worn by Arabians of fashion. They wear fifteen caps, one over another, some of which are indeed of linen, but the rest of thick cloth or cotton. That which covers all the rest is usually richly embroidered with gold, and has always some sentence of the Koran embroidered upon it. Over all these



caps they wrap a large piece of muslin, called a *Sasch*, ornamented at the ends, which flow loose upon the shoulders, with silk or golden fringes. As it must be very disagreeable, in a hot country, to have the head always loaded in this manner, the Arabians, when in their own houses, or with intimate friends, lay aside this useless weight, all to one or two of the caps. But, before persons whom they are obliged to treat with ceremony or respect, they dare not appear without their turbans. Those who desire to pass for men of learning, discover their pretensions by the bulk of their turbans.

Arabians of rank wear one piece of dress, which is not in use among the other inhabitants of the East. This is a piece of fine linen upon the shoulder, which seems to have been originally intended to shelter the wearer from the sun and rain, but is now merely ornamental.

The common class of Arabs wear only two caps, with the *Sasch* carelessly bound on the head. Some have drawers and a shirt; but the greater number have only a piece of linen about their loins, a large girdle with the *Jambea*, and a piece of cloth upon the shoulders; in other respects they are naked, having neither shoes nor stockings. In the highlands, where the climate is colder, the people wear sheep skins. The scanty clothes which they wear through the day,

day, are also their covering by night ; the cloth swaddled about the waist serves for a mattrafs ; and the linen garment worn about the loins is a sheet to cover the Arab while he sleeps. The highlanders, to secure themselves from being infested by insects, sleep in sacks.

Persons in a middle rank of life wear, instead of shoes, sandals, being merely single soles, or sometimes thin pieces of wood, bound upon the foot with a strap of dressed leather. People of better fortune use slippers, like those worn through the rest of the East ; and this is also the dress for the feet worn by the women.

The ordinary dress of the Arabs is indeed simple enough ; but they have also a sort of great coat, without sleeves, called *Abba*, which is simpler still. I was acquainted with a blind taylor at Basra, who earned his bread by making *Abbas* ; so that they cannot be of a very nice shape, or made of many pieces. In Yemen they are worn only by travellers ; but in the province of Lachsa, the *Abba* is a piece of dress commonly used by both sexes.

In several places in Arabia, the men wear no drawers ; but these with a large shirt are all the dress used by the lower women. In the Tehama, women of this class wrap a linen cloth about their loins in the manner of drawers. The women of Hedsjas veil their faces, like those of Egypt.

Egypt, with a narrow piece of linen, which leaves both the eyes uncovered. In Yemen, they wear a larger veil, which covers the face so entirely, that the eyes can hardly be discerned. At Sana and Mokha, they cover the face with a gauze veil, which is often embroidered with gold. They wear all rings on their fingers, arms, nose, and ears. They stain their nails red, and their hands and feet of a brownish yellow colour, with the juice of the plant *Elbenne*. The circle of the eyes, and even the eye-lashes, they paint black, with a preparation of lead ore called *Kochbel*. The men sometimes imitate this mode of painting the eyes with *Kochbel*; but persons of sense laugh at so effeminate a practice.

This mode of staining the skin of a brown colour, is possibly used by the women of the low country, in consequence of the natural sallowness of their complexion. They fancy, that, when the whole body is brown, the peculiar darkness of the countenance will escape observation. I conjecture this much concerning the women, from the practice of the men; they going almost naked, rub the body all over with *Elbenne*, and thus become entirely brown.

The women of Yemen also make black punctures in their face to improve their beauty. Their natural complexion is a deep yellow; but,  
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among the hills, are persons of fair complexions and fine faces, and there even among the peasantry. In the towns, these women, who think themselves handsome, lift up their veils to shew their beauty, whenever they think they can do it unobserved.

Fashion shews its influence, in a particular manner, in the modes in which the hair and beard are worn in Arabia. In the Imam of Sana's dominions, all men, of whatever station, shave their heads. In other parts of Yemen, all men, even the Shiechs, preserve their hair, wrap it in a handkerchief, and knot it up behind; caps and turbans are not in use there. Some of the highlanders keep their hair long and loose, and bind the head with small cords.

Every body, without exception, wears the beard of its natural length; but the Arabs keep their mustachios very short. In the highlands of Yemen, where few strangers are ever seen, it is disgraceful to appear without a beard. Our servant wore only his mustachios; and those good highlanders fancied that we had shaven him by way of punishment for some fault.

The Turks, on the contrary, shave their beards, and keep only their mustachios long. Among this nation, the beard is an ensign of honour and dignity; and therefore the slaves and domestic servants of great men are obliged

to keep themselves close shaven. The Persians wear long mustachios, and clip their beards in an awkward enough fashion. The *Kurds* shave their beards, but preserve their mustachios, with a list of hair upon each cheek.

The Arabians have all black beards. Some old men, when their beards are whitened by time, dye them red; but this practice is generally disapproved. The Persians blacken their beards, although naturally black, and continue to do so, till a very advanced age. Turkish gravity could not endure the use of this fashion of ornament. Some young noblemen are indeed beginning to imitate this Persian mode, in order to disguise the whiteness of their beards; for this colour of their hair is more common in Turkey than in the southern regions of Asia. A white beard is thought by the Turks to be very unbecoming for a man of rank.

When Turks, who have had themselves shaven in their youth, determine upon suffering their beards to grow, they observe the ceremony of pronouncing a *Fatba*, which is considered as a vow to preserve their hair untouched by a razor through the rest of life. The Mahometans perhaps fancy, as some travellers have represented, that angels occupy their beards. It is at least certain, that a man who cuts his beard, after having once determined to preserve it long, is severely punished

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ed for the breach of his vow. At Baſra, he would be condemned to receive three hundred blows with a ſtick, but might indeed, for a round ſum, eſcape the puniſhment. An inhabitant of that city, who had, twelve years before I viſited it, ſhaven himſelf in a drunken fit, fled to India, and durſt never return, for fear of the diſgrace, and the puniſhment, which he had merited both by his ſhaving and his drunkenneſs.

The Jews, through all the Eaſt, preſerve their beards from their youth. They wear the beard not in the ſame form as the Muſſulmans and Chriſtians, ſhaving none of it about the temples and the ears. To diſtinguiſh themſelves ſtill more from the reſt of mankind, they retain two tufts of hair hanging over their ears. Theſe Jews of Arabia reſemble thoſe of Poland; only they have a more decent and leſs beggarly aſpect. They dare not wear the turban, but are obliged to content themſelves with a ſmall bonnet. Neither are they ſuffered to dreſs in any colour but blue; all their clothes are of blue cloth. They are alſo forbidden the uſe of the *Jambea*.

As there are many *Banians* ſettled in Arabia, I ſhall add a few words reſpecting their dreſs. It conſiſts of a turban of a particular form, a piece of linen upon the ſhoulders, another piece of linen fixed by a ſtring about their loins, and ſlip-pers.

pers. Some also wear over these pieces of dress a long white robe, which plaits upon the haunches, and fits close upon the body and the arms. These Indians used to dress entirely in white ; but they received, some years since, an order from Sana, enjoining them to wear red clothes. To obtain a dispensation from this change of dress, they paid a considerable sum to the Imam, and the order was revoked. They were soon after enjoined, by another edict, to wear a red, instead of a white turban : But, not choosing to buy off in this instance, they obeyed, and now wear a red turban, with the rest of their dress white.

## CHAP. V.

### *Arabian Politeness.*

IN Yemen, Oman, and Persia, an European is treated with as much civility as a Mahometan would find in Europe. Some travellers complain of the rude manners of the inhabitants of the East ; but it must be allowed that the Europeans often involve themselves in embarrassments in these countries, by being the first to express contempt or aversion for the Mussulmans. A proof of the desire of these governments to obtain

tain the friendship of Europeans, is their exacting easier duties of custom from them than from other nations, as I had occasion to remark, both in Persia, and throughout all Arabia.

In Turkey they are less kindly treated. A comparison of the manners of the Turks with those of the Arabians will best prove the superior politeness of the latter nation.

The Turks in general hate Europeans ; probably from an indistinct remembrance of the bloody wars which they have at different times waged with the inhabitants of the West. Children are, with them, as much terrified at the name of European as with us at the name of Turk. Turks, in the service of Europeans, consider their masters as indebted to them for protection, yet are despised by their countrymen for eating the bread of Christians, and at Constantinople are nicknamed swine-herds. The Europeans are held in particular abhorrence at Damietta, Damascus, and Kahira. The Arabians, having never had any quarrels with the inhabitants of Europe, have not the same reasons for viewing them with aversion.

Neither are the Christians of the East treated equally well in all the different parts of Asia. The Armenians and Georgians are not ill looked upon in Persia ; and may aspire to the first posts in the army, without changing their



religion. I was myself acquainted at Shiraz with a Khan, and several officers, who were Christians, and natives of Georgia. The Turks again admit no Christian soldiers into their armies, and regard their Christian fellow subjects with the most insolent contempt.

In Arabia, the Christians are called *Nassara* or *Nufrani*. As they are incapable of any honourable office in this country, the most respectable among them are merchants. The Arabians, for this reason, give every Christian of a decent appearance the title either of *Chauadsje*, or of *Barsagan*, two appellations both signifying merchant. A Christian of more ordinary dress and equipage is called *Mallim*, or master, as they suppose such a one to be an artisan. I had assumed the name of *Abdallah*, and was accordingly called in Arabia *Chauadsje Abdalla*, and in Persia *Abdalla Aga*. In Natolia, where the Turkish language prevails, and civility seems to be unknown, the Turks call the Christians of the East *Dsjaurler*, a term extremely contemptuous. A Turk, who had hired me his mules for the journey between Aleppo and Konie, and was consequently in my service, never gave me another name than *Dsjaur*. I told him indeed, that I was not a *Dsjaur*, but a Frank; and he afterwards gave me the name of Frank or Abdallah.

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The behaviour of the Turks to the Christians corresponds to the reproachful language in which they address them. In the Turkish empire, Christians are obliged to wear a badge, which marks their servile condition, and to pay a poll-tax. In Constantinople, Christians, as they pass, are required either to sweep the streets, and remove the filth, or to pay money, that they may be excused. These vexatious impositions are not warranted by the government; but so abject is the condition of the Christians, that they dare not complain of an injury suffered from a Mahometan. They are in danger of being insulted if they appear in the streets on days of public festivity. I shall mention one instance, out of many, which I witnessed, of the insolence of the Turks. In Natolia, we met in the high way with a Turk, who being about to mount his horse, compelled an honest Greek merchant to alight from his mule, and hold the stirrup to him. An Arab would blush for such rudeness. A Schiech, from whom we had hired camels, used often to present his back for a step by which I might mount my dromedary.

I know enough of the Christians of the East, to induce me to believe that their own conduct often draws upon them the contempt of the Turks; at least, the Greek merchants whom I  
saw

ſaw in Natolia were mean, flattering, babbling creatures ; qualities which could not but render them contemptible to a haughty and ſerious nation. They would eagerly run to hold the ſtirrup, not only to a Turk, but even to their own *Katerdsjis* or horſe-hirers, with whom they condeſcend to cultivate a ſhameful familiarity. A Turk, who was ſervant to two Greeks, called his maſters *Dsjaurlers*, and they him *Bekir Aga*, or Mr *Bekir*. In the preſence of the Turks, they call themſelves *Dsjaurlers*, and give the Turks the pompous titles of *Baſſham*, *Effendum*, *Sultanium*, &c. excluſively; but, on the contrary, in the abſence of the Turks, they diſcover an inſufferable degree of vanity, and the ſoſteſt names they give them are *Kafr* and *Kopek*. The Armenians indeed are of a different character. They are grave and ſincere, behave with a degree of dignity, and know better how to command the eſteem of the Turks, who treat them better than the Greeks. They ſometimes, or indeed pretty often, hear themſelves called infidels ; but this reproach they laugh at, and confidently name themſelves Chriſtians, by which means they come to receive the ſame name from the Mahometans.

In Arabia and Perſia, the Jews are held at leaſt as much in contempt as in Europe. In Turkey they are very numerous, and praſtiſe  
all

all different trades. Among those of them who are employed in commerce, are some rich bankers, who often rise into credit with people in power, and afford protection to their brethren. The Arabians call them *Yebudi*. In Turkey, where they are insulted alike by the Mussulmans and the Christians, they receive the denomination of *Tschefied*, which is still more opprobrious than than that of *Dsjaur*.

The chief part of Arabian politeness is hospitality; a virtue which is hereditary to the nation, and which they still exercise in its primitive simplicity. An ambassador sent to any prince or Schiech has his expences defrayed, and receives presents, according to the custom of the East. A traveller of any distinction, who should go to see any great Schiech in the desert, would receive the same treatment. I have spoken occasionally of the *Kans* and *Manfals*, or houses of hospitable entertainment, in which I was received on my travels. What appears to distinguish the Arabians from the other inhabitants of the East, is, that they exercise hospitality to all, without respect of rank or religion.

The Arabians invite all who come in while they are at table, to eat with them, whether great or small, Mahometans or Christians. In the caravans, I have often had the pleasure of seeing

a poor muleteer presses passengers to share his meals, and, with an air of satisfaction, distribute his little store of bread and dates to whosoever would accept any part of it from him. I have, on the other hand, been shocked at the behaviour even of rich Turks, who retired to a corner to eat by themselves, that they might avoid asking any one to partake of their fare.

When a Bedouin Shiech eats bread with strangers, they may trust his fidelity, and depend upon his protection. A traveller will always do well therefore to take an early opportunity of securing the friendship of his guide by a meal. When two Arabians salute each other, he who speaks first lays his right hand on his heart, and says, "*Salam Aleikum*," or, "peace be with you;" the other replies, "*Aleikum essalam*," or, "with you be peace." Old persons commonly add their blessing, or rather, "the mercy and blessing of God." The Mahometans of Egypt and Syria never salute the Christians in these words; but content themselves with saying to them, "*Sebachel chair*, good day," or, "*Sabheb salamat*, friend, how art thou?" In Yemen, this distinction is not observed. The inhabitants of the highlands of Yemen use a form of salutation, of which I could never learn the meaning.

I long imagined that the use of a peculiar form of salutation to Christians was owing to the orthodox

thodox zeal of the Mahometans; but I have since understood that it is rather owing to a superstitious aversion in the oriental Christians for the Muffulman form of salutation. They would not suffer me to use those words, and would not reply in them to some Turks who mistook them for men of their own nation; a circumstance which easily happens, as Christians sometimes use the white turban to procure respect, and to make robbers suppose them Turks.

Two Arabs of the desert meeting, shake hands more than ten times. Each kisses his own hand, and still repeats the question "how art thou?" In Yemen, persons who value themselves on their good-breeding use many compliments. Each does as if he wished the other's hand, and draws back his own to avoid receiving the same honour. At length, to end the contest, the eldest of the two suffers the other to kiss his fingers. People of rank embrace their equals; and all treat one another with a degree of politeness that surprises strangers.

At visits, they observe nearly the same customs as the other inhabitants of the East. When the visit is an ordinary and familiar one, pipes of *Kircher* and *Kaad* are always presented; on a visit of ceremony, rose-water and perfumes are added. When it is time for the visitor to retire, a servant comes in with a flask of rose-water, and besprinkles

besprinkles the company ; another perfumes the beard of the visitor, and the wide sleeves of his gown. When we first saw the ceremony used, which was at *Raschid*, we were a good deal surprised to see a servant sit down beside us, and cast water upon our faces.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of some peculiar Customs.*

IN hot countries, cleanliness is indispensibly necessary to health. The common people, who reason little, might forget or neglect a care so necessary to their welfare. For this reason, as it should seem, have the founders of several sects enjoined purifications and ablutions as a religious duty.

The Arabians are obliged to be extreme cleanly by the laws equally of their climate and their religion ; and they observe these precepts with the most scrupulous exactitude. They not only wash, bathe, and pair their nails very often, but cut away all hairs from the body ; and pluck them from those parts upon which the razor cannot be employed, that not the least impurity may remain upon them. Those are held in contempt who exercise uncleanly trades, such as the servants

rants at the public baths, barbers, cooks, tanners, &c. This contempt, however, falls upon the employment, without operating to the exclusion of the person exercising it from society.

Much has been said concerning the origin of the custom of circumcising infants, which seems, at a first view, so absurd. Some have referred it to men's disposition, to offer to the Deity a part of what they hold dearest, and value as most precious. But this seems to be an awkward attempt at pleasantry, and besides, is not true; otherwise circumcision would be practised among all nations, in all climates, and would be regarded as a religious ceremony; whereas it subsists only in hot countries, and there not as a religious institution, but as an old custom.

It is true that several nations, in hot climates, do not practise it, such as the Persians, the Indians, and many of the inhabitants of Africa; but there are others who observe it, although not enjoined by the precepts of their religion. Such are the Christians of Abyssinia, and many of the idolatrous people of Africa. The Mahometans do not consider circumcision as a religious duty, but merely as a laudable custom of their ancestors, worthy of being kept up. None but the superstitious Jews appear to attach ideas of religious sanctity to an observance which is purely civil.



The custom of circumcising infants certainly owes its origin to the physical nature of these climates. There are some corporeal defects and infirmities more common in some countries than in others, which this practice has a tendency to remedy ; and, where these prevail, circumcision is used. Nothing is more effectual in preventing those diseases, which, in hot countries, are liable to attack certain parts, than the keeping of those parts very clean by frequent ablution. Circumcision renders this ablution necessary, and reminds those, who might otherwise neglect it, of its utility. Legislators have accordingly thought it their duty to make people take suitable precautions for the preservation of health, by giving this useful custom the sanction of laws civil and religious.

This conjecture will appear the more probable, when it is considered that the practice of circumcising girls is general in the same countries in which boys are circumcised. In Oman, on the shores of the Persian Gulph, among the Christians of Abyssinia, and in Egypt among the Arabs and Copts, this latter custom is prevalent. At Basra and Bagdad, all the women of Arabian blood circumcise their daughters as well as their sons. At Kahira, the women who perform this operation are as well known as midwives. They are openly called into houses from the streets, without

without any secret being made of the intention with which they are invited.

In Egypt, we mentioned to a nobleman, who had invited us to his country seat, our curiosity to know in what manner girls were circumcised. He immediately made a young Arabian girl, who had been circumcised, and was then eighteen years of age, to be called in, and allowed us to examine, in the presence of his servants, what changes had been produced by the operation, upon the parts, and even to make a drawing of them. I was convinced, that it is also out of cleanliness, and to render ablution easier, that the practice of circumcising women has been first adopted. No law has appointed it, any more than that of boys; it is a usage, not a religious duty.

The corruption of dead bodies has the most destructive effects upon the health in hot countries; more so than in more temperate climates. It was therefore necessary to secure the inhabitants, from its noxious influence, by increasing, through religious motives, their natural aversion for dead carcases. Mahomet, and some other founders of sects, have for this reason affixed ideas of spiritual impurity to the act of touching a dead body. Some Mussulmans require great purification to cleanse a man thus defiled, and separate him for some time from society.

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'The Arabians are less rigid ; when a person of this nation has had the misfortune to touch a carcase, he washes himself carefully, and, when no mark of external impurity remains, he then returns to the ordinary intercourse of life,

A frugal nation, who regard even sobriety as a virtue, must naturally affix ideas of shame to every thing that indicates any degree of intemperance. The Arabians are greatly shocked when that accident happens to a man, which is the natural consequence of the fulness of the intestines after too copious a meal, and of the indigestion of windy articles of diet. The *Chevalier D'Arvieux* has been blamed as guilty of exaggeration in what he says concerning the delicacy of the Arabs upon this score ; but I have found all that he says of the manners and usages of this nation to be strictly true. I am therefore inclined to believe equally what he relates concerning things which I could not observe or verify myself. It should seem that the Arabs are not all equally shocked at such an involuntary accident. Yet, a Bedouin, guilty of such a piece of indecency, would be despised by his countrymen. The instance of an Arab of the tribe of *Belludsje* was mentioned to me, who, for a reason of this sort, was obliged to leave his country, and never durst return.

The ignorance of the Arabians subjects them to all the illusions of superstition. They wear almost all amulets upon their arms; on their fingers they have ordinary rings. Their religion is said to oblige them to take off their rings, which are of gold, or set with precious stones, whenever they say their prayers, which, if this precaution were neglected, would be of no efficacy. They seem to think, that, in order to be heard, they must appear before the Deity in the utmost humiliation and abasement.

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## SECTION XXVII.

OF THE LANGUAGE AND SCIENCES OF THE  
ARABIANS.

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### CHAP. I.

*Of the Language and Writing of the Arabians.*

THE Arabian language, one of the most ancient and general in the world, has had the fate of other living languages, which have been spoken  
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through many ages, and by the inhabitants of different provinces and countries remote from one another. It has gradually undergone such an alteration, that the Arabic spoken and written by Mahomet may now be regarded as a dead language.

From religious prejudices, perhaps the Mussulmans in general believe, and the Arabians assert, the language of the Koran, and consequently the dialect spoken at Mecca in the days of Mahomet, to be the purest and most perfect of all. That dialect, however, differs so widely from the modern language of Arabia, that it is now taught and studied in the college of Mecca just as the Latin is at Rome. The same is done through Yemen; and is so much the more necessary, because the dialect of that province, which differed from that of Mecca eleven centuries since, has suffered new and very considerable changes since that period. The dialect of the highlands of Yemen is said to have the strongest analogy to the language of the Koran; for those highlanders have little intercourse with strangers. The old Arabic language is, through all the East, just like Latin in Europe, a learned tongue, to be acquired only in colleges, or by the perusal of the best authors.

There is perhaps no other language diversified by so many dialects as that of Arabia. The nation

nation having extended their conquests, and sent out colonies through great part of Asia, and almost over the whole coasts of Africa; the different people conquered by them have been obliged to speak the language of their new masters and neighbours; but those people retained at the same time terms and phrases of their former language, which have debased the purity of the Arabic, and formed a diversity of dialects.

These different dialects in Arabia bear a considerable resemblance to those of Italy; beyond the confines of Arabia, their reciprocal relations to each other are the same as those of the languages of Provence, Spain, and Portugal, and all the others derived from the Latin. Even in the narrow extent of the Imam of Sana's dominions, this diversity of dialects is very considerable. Not only does the language of the Tehama differ from that spoken in the highlands; but, even in the same parts of the country, people of rank use words and phrases entirely unknown to the rest of the people. These dialects of Yemen differ still more widely from those used by the Bedouins in the desert, than from one another.

The pronunciation of one province differs equally from that of other provinces. Letters and sounds are often changed in such a manner as to produce an entire alteration upon the words. I found the pronunciation of the Southern Arabs  
more

more soft, and better adapted to European organs, than that of the inhabitants of Egypt and Syria.

A similar diversity of dialects distinguishes the Turkish language. The Turks of Basra cannot understand those of Constantinople, and are no better understood themselves by the Turcomans of Persia.

Although the Arabian conquerors have introduced and established their language in the countries which they conquered, yet their subjects have not always left off the use of their mother tongue. In Syria and Palestine, indeed, no language is to be heard but the Arabic; and yet the Syriac is not absolutely a dead language, but is still spoken in several villages in the Pachalick of Damascus. In many places, in the neighbourhood of Merdin and Mosul, the Christians still speak the Chaldean language; and the inhabitants of the villages who do not frequent towns, never hear any other than their mother tongue. The Christians born in the cities of Merdin and Mosul, although they speak Arabic, write in the Chaldean characters, just as the Maronites write their Arabic in Syriac letters, and the Greeks the Turkish in Greek letters.

Many people living under the dominion of the Arabians and Turks have lost the use of their mother tongue. The Greeks and Armenians

nians settled in Egypt and Syria speak Arabic ; and the services of their public worship are performed in two languages at once. In Natolia, these nations speak their own languages in several different dialects. The Turkish officers sometimes extend their despotism to the language of their subjects. A Pacha of *Kayser*, who could not endure to hear the Greek language spoken, forbade the Greeks in his Pachalic, under pain of death, to use any language but the Turkish. Since that prohibition was issued, the Christians of *Kayser* and *Angora* have continued to speak the Turkish, and at present do not even understand their original language.

The *Kurdes*, who are nearly independent, have preserved their ancient language, of which there are in *Kurdistan* three principal dialects. I was informed that the *Sabæans*, who are commonly called Christians of St John, still speak and write their ancient language. The most learned of the few of this sect, who are settled in *Basra*, was a farrier ; him I prevailed with to write me out the characters of his language ; but he wrote them so indistinctly, that I could form no idea of his alphabet.

I was not fortunate enough to discover any *Hamjarine* inscriptions in Arabia, although I had learnt that there were such in several places written in absolutely unknown characters. I have



already spoken, in the proper place, of an inscription, probably still more ancient, which was shown me by a Dutch renegado, and of which the characters bore a great resemblance to those of the inscriptions among the ruins of Periepolis. A *Maronite* of *Mount Libanus* related to me, that grottos and ruins were to be seen upon a hill in his country, on which were unknown inscriptions, most probably Phœnician.

The Arabic character, which was anciently in use, but is now entirely lost, was the *Kufic*. It seems to have been the alphabet of the Arabians of Mecca ; for the Koran was originally written in Kufic characters. The inhabitants of Yemen have always used a different alphabet, and therefore could not read the Koran, when it was first published, after the death of Mahomet. In Yemen, I copied some inscriptions in Kufic characters, which had been engraven in the twelfth century. These characters being in some degree of a square form, are still used in inscriptions.

I had flattered myself, that I might obtain some light from medals concerning the ancient written characters of this nation ; but medals are extremely rare in Arabia ; when found, they are commonly sold to the goldsmiths, and immediately melted down. In Kurdistan, a great quantity of Grecian, Roman, and Persian medals,  
have

have been dug up, and of them better care is taken; in places remote from great towns, they are used as current money.

The invention of the modern characters, which are very different from the Kufic, is ascribed to a vizier. The Arabians, Persians, and Turks, write Arabic in sets of characters differing in several particulars from one another. They have also different modes of writing for different forms of business, each of which has its particular name.

The hand-writing of the Arabians in the common business of life is not legible. The orientals, however, value themselves on their writing, and have carried the art of making beautiful written characters to high perfection. But the Arabians value chiefly a species of elegance, which consists in their manner of joining their letters, the want of which makes themselves dislike the style in which Arabic books are printed in Europe.

They sign their letters with a sort of cypher, to prevent the possibility of counterfeiting their signature; at least, the great and the learned do so. Their letters folded are an inch in breadth, and the leaves are pasted together at one end. They cannot seal them; for wax is so soft in hot countries that it cannot retain an impression.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Education and Schools of the Arabians.*

THE monarchs of the East do not take the same care, or lay out the same expence, for the encouragement of science as the sovereigns of Europe. In Arabia, therefore, are neither numerous academies, nor men of profound learning.

Yet the Arabian youth are not entirely neglected. In the cities, many of the lowest of the people are taught both to read and write; the same qualifications are also common among the Shiechs of the desert, and in Egypt. Persons of distinction retain preceptors in their families to instruct their children and young slaves; for they bring up such of their young slaves as appear to possess natural abilities, like children of the family.

In almost every mosque is a school, denominated *Maddraffe*, having a foundation for the support of teachers, and the entertainment and instruction of poor scholars. In great towns are likewise other schools, to which people of middle rank send their children to receive religious instruction, and to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. I have often seen schools of this sort in the market place; they are open like  
shops

shops towards the street. The noise and appearance of passengers does not seem to divert the attention of the scholars, who sit before a small desk, and read their lessons aloud, balancing themselves constantly in their seats; to such a degree does motion appear necessary to rouse and keep up the attention of the inhabitants of hot countries. No girls attend these schools; they are privately taught by women.

Beside these small schools, there are some more considerable seminaries of education in some great towns in Arabia. These are colleges in which the sciences of astronomy, astrology, philosophy, and medicine are taught; in these the Arabians, although possessed of natural abilities, have, for want of good books and masters, made but little progress. In the dominions of the Imam, there have long been two famous academies; one at *Zebid* for *Sunnites*, and the other at *Damar* for the *Zeidites*. When I passed through these two cities, I happened to neglect making myself acquainted with the professors, or acquiring any knowledge of their system of instruction. I suppose, however, that the same studies are cultivated in these two academies as in that of *Dsjamea el Asbar* at Kahira.

The interpretation of the Koran, and the study of the ancient history of the Mahometans, are the principal employments of men of letters among

among the Arabians. These studies take up much time; for the student must not only acquire the ancient Arabic, but also make himself familiar with all the commentators on the Koran, the number of whom is very considerable.

I was informed, that all men of letters undergo a public examination, before they can be promoted to any employment, civil or ecclesiastical. Yet those examinations are surely conducted with partiality; for many persons, indifferently qualified, rise to considerable offices, while men of merit are often obliged to act as transcribers or schoolmasters.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of Arabian Poetry and Eloquence.*

THE Arabians have been always accounted admirers of poetry. Their early history records many instances of the estimation in which they held this art, even before the days of Mahomet, and of the glory which any family acquired that produced a poet.

The Arabians have no great poets among them at present, although they still cultivate poetry, and sometimes reward those who excel in it. The best poets are among the Bedouins  
of

of *Dsjof*. A Schiech of that country was, a few years since, imprisoned at Sana. The Schiech, observing a bird upon the roof of a house, recollected the opinion of those pious Muffulmans, who think it a meritorious action to deliver a bird from a cage. He thought that he himself had as good a right to liberty as any bird, and expressed this idea in a poem, which his guards got by heart, and which becoming generally known, at length reached the Monarch's ears, who was so pleased with it, that he set the Schiech at liberty, although he had been guilty of various acts of robbery.

The Arabians often sing the exploits of their Schiechs. Not long since, the tribe of *Khafael* having obtained a victory over the Pacha of Bagdad, made a song, in which the actions of every one of their chiefs were celebrated. But the tribe of *Khafael* being beaten next year by the Pacha, a poet of Bagdad made a parody of the Arabian song, in which he extolled the valour of the Pacha and his officers. In my time, the song of the Arabians still continued to be sung at Bagdad, and among the Bedouins. When *Affad*, Pacha of Damascus, who had long commanded the caravans, and was beloved by the Arabians, was assassinated by order of the Sultan, the Bedouins made an elegy on his death, and sang it openly in the towns of Syria. That piece

piece is in the form of a dialogue between some Arabians, the daughter of the Schiech of the tribe of *Harb*, and the lieutenant of the assassinated Pacha.

A Maronite informed me, that the poets of Syria sent their compositions to the academy of *Dsjamea el Afhar*, at Kahira; and did not sing them publicly till they had received the approbation of that academy.

In a country like Arabia, where occasions of speaking in public seldom occur, eloquence is an useless accomplishment, and therefore cannot be much cultivated. The Arabians say, however, that they hear great orators in their mosques. As Europeans are not admitted to hear those sermons, I never had an opportunity to satisfy myself in respect to the truth of this account of the sacred eloquence of Arabia.

The only theatres for the exercise of profane eloquence are the coffee-houses in Arabia, Egypt, and Syria. Those coffee-houses are commonly large halls, which have their floors spread with straw mats, and are illuminated at night by a multitude of lamps. The guests are served with pipes, and a cup of coffee. As the Arabians never engage in any game, and sit still without entering into conversation with one another, they would find their evenings extremely irksome, if readers and orators did not attend

attend in the coffee-houses to amuse them. These are commonly Mullachs, or poor scholars.

Such of them as are content with the praise of reading or repeating the works of others, select chosen passages from some favourite authors, such as, among the Arabians, *the history of Autar*, an Arabian hero who lived before Mahomet; the adventures of *Rustan Sal*, a Persian hero; or of *Beber*, king of Egypt; the history of the *Ayubites*, anciently sovereigns of Arabia; and *the life of Bahluldan*, a buffoon in the court of *Haroun El Raschid*. The least of these books contains some good morality.

Those Mullahs who aspire to the praise of invention make tales and fables, which they walk about and recite; or assuming oratorical consequence, deliver discourses upon any subjects they choose. When the orator has ended, he obtains a voluntary contribution from his hearers. This, although but a very moderate reward, encourages those poor Mullachs to learn to recite gracefully, or to compose tales and speeches with some success. At Aleppo, I heard of a man of distinction who studied for his own pleasure, yet had gone the round of all the coffee-houses in the city to pronounce moral harangues.

At Constantinople, assemblies in the coffee houses are, for political reasons, prohibited; and the decoction of coffee is sold only in the



shops. The Turks, an ignorant, grave, and silent nation, are indeed not fond of public orators, and have no relish for an amusement, so delightful to the Arabians, who have greater sensibility for the beauties of poetry and eloquence.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Of the Astronomy of the Arabians.*

THE modes of the division of time in use among the Arabians show how little progress this nation have made in astronomy. They know indeed a little of its elements; but this, it should seem, rather from tradition, than from any observations of their own.

The Arabian day consists of twenty-four hours, and lasts from sun-setting to sun-setting. Their hours are therefore of uncertain duration, and vary with the length of the natural day, or the time during which the sun is above the horizon. As they are strangers to the use of watches, none of them has any precise idea of the duration of their hours, but, like the peasants of Europe, they distinguish the different parts of the day by vague, uncertain denominations, which only approach near the truth.

Their year consists of twelve lunar months. They begin the month with the new moon; and,  
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when the sky is so clouded that they cannot see her rise, then they make no difficulty of beginning the month a day or two later. Thus all their months go the round of the seasons; and this division of the year marks out no period for the labours of husbandry, or any of the other employments of civil life. To obviate this inconvenience, the learned reckon by other months corresponding to the course of the solar year, and consisting of the same number of days as ours.

In Arabia, as in other Mahometan countries, two great festivals are annually celebrated; that of offerings, called *Arafa* or Corban, and that of *Beiram*, immediately after Ramadan. The reckoning by lunar months occasions these festivals also to circulate through the whole year. When the fast of Ramadan falls in Summer, it is extremely distressing; for the people, however employed in labour, dare taste nothing, even in the longest days of the year, till the sun is down.

At Constantinople, the Sultan's astronomer composes every year a portable almanac, of which there are at least several copies made. But, in Egypt and Arabia, this mode of acquainting the people with the return of the festivals, and the progress of the seasons, has not been thought of; and so ignorant are they on this head, that the same festival is sometimes two days earlier,  
and

and sometimes as much later than the just time, and often on different days at different places. A cloud hiding the new moon from one city, while she is seen by another, will be sufficient to produce these irregularities.

It is not for want of a passion for astronomy that the Arabians have made so little progress in this science. But they want books and instruments. I found some of the nobles curious to see, and to assist at astronomical observations; and some of their learned men passed whole nights with me in examining the heavens. They have the work of *Abdarachman es Sofi* upon the constellations, and the tables of *Ulugh Beigh*, by which some astronomers in the great towns are enabled to calculate eclipses. Their instruments are a celestial globe of copper, bestudded with golden stars, which they well know how to use; an astrolabe of brass, and a quadrant of wood, to take altitudes, and to determine the hour for prayer.

I was told that the Persians, but particularly the Brachmans, were more skilful astronomers than the Arabians; yet, to judge from the instruments and conversation of a Persian astrologer whom I met with at Surat, and of a Brachman with whom I was acquainted at Bombay, these two nations are equally unskilful as the inhabitants of Arabia. In making calculations,  
the

the Persian used the tables of *Ulugh Beigh*, and the Brachman a book which he called *Grola Go*, and its author *Gunnis*. The Indian's instruments were a bowl of copper, having a hole in the bottom, set in water, which served him for a pendulum, with an indifferent solar circle.

It is known to the astrologers, and to all men of sense in Arabia, that eclipses are owing to the interception of the light of one heavenly body by the interposition of another. But the people still maintain the superstitious opinion, that a huge fish pursues the planet which is eclipsed. To chase away the fish, women and children get upon the roofs of the houses, and make a noise during the eclipse by beating upon brazen kettles and basons. The rise of this custom is referred to an Arabian astronomer, who persuaded the people of this fable, that they might make a noise great enough to reach the ears of the Caliph of Persia, who had refused to credit that astronomer's prediction of the eclipse.

The Arabians seem to study astronomy solely with a view to their success in the cultivation of astrology, a science highly esteemed and very lucrative in the East. When I told the first astronomer in Kahira of the contempt in which we hold astrology in Europe, he replied, that it was a divine science, the depths of which man could not fathom. He at the same time acknowledged to  
me

me the uncertainty of his calculations ; but, added he, people desire only to know what my books say of their affairs, and that I honestly tell them.

The Koran expressly forbids all Moslems to pry into futurity by any form of divination ; and the most famous commentators for this reason represent the study of astrology as criminal. But, notwithstanding the decision of those doctors, the Mahometans are all much attached to this science ; the Shiites, however, more than the Sunnites. The former sect carry this superstition to such a length, as never to conclude a bargain without trying fortune, at least by counting the buttons on their clothes, or the beads of their rosaries. The Persians are not all alike weak in this respect. It is said that *Kerim Khan*, in compliance with the popular error, undertakes nothing of consequence, without first consulting the astrologers ; but he previously informs them of his designs, and dictates the answers which they are to return.

## CHAP V.

*Of the Diseases and Medicine of the Arabians.*

A regular and temperate life preserves the body from the attacks of disease. The Arabians, accordingly, are seldom sick, and hardly ever have recourse to physicians and medicines. When forced by extreme illness to call in a physician, they reward him poorly, and hardly pay for the value of his medicines. When the sick person dies, the physician has no reward to hope for ; if he recovers, he soon forgets the services he has received. This ingratitude of their patients has taught them to use artifices often dishonest and disgraceful, in order to obtain payment from the patient beforehand.

In Arabia, therefore, we cannot expect to find great physicians. Those who there practise the art of medicine, know little more than the technical terms, such as they find them in the books of Avicenna, and some little matters about the use of simples. All the physicians whom I knew in Yemen acted at the same time as chemists, apothecaries, surgeons, and horse-doctors ; and yet, by the practice of all these arts together, could hardly earn a livelihood.

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The Arabians have many family nostrums, which they apply with much success. A peasant from the highlands extracted, by incision, a lacteous juice from a spongy tree, and by swallowing drops of it, which he knew to be a poison, if taken in greater quantity, gave himself a purge.

The Bedouin heals wounds which have been made with clear arms, by applying to them raw flesh from a camel newly killed. A man on board the Arabian vessel in which we sailed from Jidda to Loheya complained of a colic, upon which his master put an iron in the fire, and applied it hot to him till his pains ceased.

In Yemen the anointing of the body is believed to strengthen and protect it from the heat of the sun, which the inhabitants of this province, as they wear so little clothing, are very liable to suffer. Oil, by closing up the pores of the skin, is supposed to prevent that too copious transpiration which enfeebles the frame. Perhaps too these Arabians think a glistening skin a beauty. When the intense heat comes in, they always anoint their bodies with bad oil. At Sana, all the Jews, and many of the Mahometans have their bodies anointed, whenever they find themselves indisposed. The extreme unction of the Christians in the East does not affect the health; for they are obliged to pay their patriarch so dear a price for the pretended holy oil, that, out of frugality

frugality, the point of a silver needle only is dipped in the oil, and what adheres to it dropped upon the dying person.

It was formerly imagined that the Arabians would rather die than endure the administration of a glyster; but our physician prevailed with several persons of distinction at Cairo to take this remedy. Every one was shocked, however, when he proposed it for a woman. Bleeding is seldom employed in Arabia; yet, a Banian bled one of us with great dexterity at Mokha. In Yemen, it is pretty frequently used. At Basra, the lower people, especially porters, scarify their legs, in the idea that this practice has a tendency to improve their strength.

Toothachs are less common in Arabia than in Europe, because the inhabitants wash the mouth, after eating, more carefully than we. In the towns, however, this disorder is not unknown, and is ascribed to the infectious smell with which the air is tainted from the common sewers. At Basra, where these are not carefully cleansed, the teeth of the inhabitants are very much spoiled; and I have seen a barber stopped in the street, by a person in pain, to draw out his teeth publicly. These toothachs are not owing to the use of coffee, for they were common in Egypt before this beverage was drunk there. A Mullah told me that an Arabian had



been cured of a tooth-ach by introducing into a hollow tooth the smoke of a certain plant, which had brought several small worms out of that tooth.

A disease very common in Yemen is the attack of the *Guinea-worm*, or the *Vena Medinenfis*, as it is called by the physicians of Europe. This disease is supposed to be occasioned by the use of the putrid waters, which people are obliged to drink in several parts of Yemen; and for this reason the Arabians always pass water, with the nature of which they are unacquainted, through a linen cloth, before drinking it. When one unfortunately swallows any of the eggs of this insect, no immediate consequence follows; but after a considerable time the worm begins to shew itself through the skin. Our physician, Mr Cramer, was, within a few days of his death, attacked by five of these worms at once, although this was more than five months after we had left Arabia. In the isle of *Karek*, I saw a French officer, named *Le Page*, who, after a long and difficult journey, performed on foot, and in an Indian dress, between Pondicherry and Surat, through the heat of India, was busy extracting a worm out of his body. He supposed that he had got it by drinking bad water in the country of the *Marattas*.

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This disorder is not dangerous, if the person affected can extract the worm without breaking it. With this view, it is rolled on a small bit of wood, as it comes out of the skin. It is slender as a thread, and two or three feet long. It gives no pain as it makes its way out of the body, unless what may be occasioned by the care which must be taken of it for some weeks. If unluckily it is broken, it then returns into the body, and the most disagreeable consequences ensue, palsy, a gangrene, and sometimes death.

As venomous serpents are very common in hot, dry countries, it often happens that they bite people who have occasion to be much in the open fields. The Arabians would not, for any compensation, teach us the secret by which they cure their bites, and prevent the effects of the poison. But, a Shiech at Basra, who was celebrated for his skill in the occult sciences, informed me, that he used to scarify the wound, and then rubbed it to his mouth, and sucked the poison without danger to himself, and with the happiest success. This mode of cure is not unlike that of the Hottentots, who apply bruised slices of a sort of white onion to wounds of this sort. Over all the East, the power of sympathy in curing diseases is firmly believed. Some instances were mentioned to me of persons who had healed others bitten by serpents, at a distance, without

without seeing them, or applying any remedies to them.

Besides, the serpents of Asia are not all alike dangerous. Some are harmless and familiar, take refuge in the walls of houses, and are esteemed agreeable guests by the inhabitants. The sailors brought a serpent of this character on board our ship, after it had been inadvertently carried out, lest its absence might prove unlucky to the vessel.

The leprosy seems to have been always an endemic disease in Arabia; for there is one species of leprosy which authors distinguish by the character of Arabian. Three different varieties of this disease are known here at present; of which two, named *Bobak* and *Barras*, are rather disgusting than dangerous; but the third, called *Juddam*, is very malignant, and apparently infectious. This latter exhibits the same symptoms which the English physician *Hillary* ascribes to what he calls *the leprosy of the joints*.

The Turks, from a misconception of the doctrine of predestination, use no precautions against the plague; but the Arabians, although true Mussulmans, are more careful in respect to the leprosy. The last prince of *Abu Schahhr* used to send to the isle of *Babbein* all who were attacked with the leprosy, or with venereal complaints. At Basra, lepers are shut up in a house  
by

by themselves; and there is a quarter in Bagdad surrounded with walls, and full of barracks, to which lepers are carried by force, if they retire not thither voluntarily; but government does not seem to provide with any care for the maintenance of these lepers. They come out every Friday to the market place to ask alms.

It is said that these wretched creatures are much inclined to sooth their misery in the enjoyments of love. Not many years since, a leper employed a cruel stratagem in order to obtain a woman with whom he was in love. He wore a fine shirt for a few days, and then caused it to be privately sold, for a trifling price, to the object of his passion. When he knew that the leprosy had made its appearance upon her, he informed against her, and procured her to be shut up with himself in the barracks.

At Bombay, the leprosy is not uncommon among the lower people; but it seems not to be of a dangerous nature; for there lepers are permitted to work in company with persons not affected with the disease. In India, as in Arabia, the leprosy is thought to be occasioned chiefly by the unwholesome food, especially putrid fish, used by the people. Mr Forskal has left a description of the different varieties of the leprosy, which must be valuable to physicians.

I could learn nothing concerning the origin of the plague. It is at least not owing to the putrefaction of the waters at Cairo. The Christians who live on the banks of the great canal are never annoyed by it. Whatever has been said concerning certain diseases preserving those who are affected by them from the contagion of the plague, is founded on prejudices which have been refuted by experience, and particularly by the observations of *Dr Ruffel*, a skilful physician at Aleppo.

Inoculation for the small-pox has been in use from time immemorial among the Bedouins. Mothers perform this operation on their children, opening the skin of the arm with the prickle of a thorn. An Arabian of the isle of *Lam*, situate on the south-east coast of Africa, informed me at Bombay, that inoculation had been known and practised in his country for several ages.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the Occult Sciences of the Arabians.*

To speak of the occult sciences of any people, is to describe their ignorance, weakness of understanding, and wildness of imagination. Such

a description would be too humiliating to human pride, did it not at the same time afford us consolation, by shewing from what endless absurdities we are saved by the study of sound philosophy, particularly of physics.

Those pretended occult sciences are in high estimation among the Arabians. None dare practise them, unless previously authorised by a master in the art, after serving a sort of apprenticeship ; or, as the Arabians say, without having for some time spread the carpet for prayer before the feet of a famous master. A certain proof of their veneration for these sciences, is, that one of the first men in Mecca, and of the highest nobility in Arabia, Shiech *Mohammed el Dsjanadsjeni*, is now the most celebrated master of the science of *Ism Allah*.

This science of *Ism Allah*, or of the name of God, is the most sublime of all ; for God is the lock, as Mahomet is the key ; and consequently none but Mussulmans can acquire it. It enables its possessor to discover what is passing in the most distant countries, to make himself familiar with genii, and to oblige them to obey his pleasure ; to dispose of the winds and seasons as he chooses ; and to cure the bites of serpents, and many other diseases or infirmities. Persons who have advanced far in the study of this science, have attained, as there are instances to prove, to

a facility of performing their prayers at noon; in the *Kaba* at Mecca, without going out of their own houses in Bagdad or Aden for the rest of the day. A merchant of Mecca, who had studied this science in that city, under the famous *Dsjanadsjeni*; assured me, that he had himself, when in danger of perishing at sea, fixed to the mast a billet written by the rules of art, which instantly calmed the storm. The art of discovering hidden treasure belongs also to this science, in which the *Magrebins* or Arabians of Barbary are known to excel.

The art of procuring sublime visions is not unknown to these Arabians; they use the same means which are employed by the devotees of certain societies in Europe. They shut themselves up for a long time without eating or drinking, in a dark place, and continue to repeat their prayers aloud till they faint away. After recovering from the swoon, and leaving the cave, they relate what they have seen in their trance. The common pretences are, that they have beheld God in his glory, angels, and spirits of all sorts, heaven and hell.

The second of these sciences, called *Simia*, is not of so exalted a nature, but has something human in it. It only teaches juggling tricks. Although the most sensible of the Mahometan clergy disapprove of this science, some orders of dervises,

dervises, however, apply to it, and practise it, as they say, to prove the truth of their religion, and the sanctity of the founder of their order. These pretended miracles are no where oftener performed than at Basra, where I have seen a company of dervises, of the order of *Bed-reddin*, walk all day about in the streets, leaping, dancing, beating the drum, and making gesticulations with sharp pointed irons, which they seemed to strike into their eyes.

In the same city, I was present at a festival which the dervises of this order celebrate every year in honour of the birth of Mahomet. The scene was in the open air, and in the court of the mosque, which was illuminated with only three lamps. Several Mullahs and dervises began with singing some passages out of the Koran. They continued to sing, with the accompaniment of some drums; and, during the music, the other dervises arose, took the sharp pointed irons, and did as if they were piercing their bodies, and even driving the irons with mallets into their flesh. Next appeared the principal actor, who, assuming an air of inspiration, directed the music to proceed, and to be raised to higher animation, in order to assist his enthusiasm, or rather to stun the ears of the spectators. In his extacy, he threw up his turban in the air, loosened his hair; for this order of dervises wear their

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hair; and pierced his body with five lances: Then mounting upon a low building, upon which a pole, sixteen feet long, and shod with a sharp iron point, had been set up, he impaled himself upon the pole, and was carried in this condition through the square.

It was an affecting sight, to see a lean man, with a long beard, and dishevelled hair, wounded all over with spikes, and then carried about spitted upon a pole. I said, as I went away, to a Mullah of my acquaintance, that the dervise performed his tricks by means of a broad belt which he carried in his long wide drawers. The Mullah replied, that he had suspected some such art, but avoided mentioning his suspicions, lest he might draw upon himself the enmity of the order of *Bedr Eddin*; for that one of his brethren had experienced great persecution from those dervises, in consequence of presuming to hint his doubts of the reality of their miracles.

Understanding that the impaled dervise went also about, exhibiting in private houses for money, I offered him two ducats, if he would come and shew me what he could do. He accepted my offer, came, and began with a long harangue on the dignity of his order, and its founder, who had transmitted to his disciples the gift of working miracles. After this he prayed, and pushed the spikes with violence into his  
head

head and body. I examined the places into which the points had seemed to enter, and found the skin slightly torn, but without effusion of blood. I however thought that he had suffered enough for two ducats, and dismissed him.

The science of *Kurra* teaches to compose billets, which secure the wearer from the power of enchantment, and from accidents of all sorts. Those billets are inclosed in small purses of skin, and worn on the head, the arm, or the breast. They are likewise bound upon the necks of horses and asses, to give them an appetite for their food, or to tame them when unmanageable. In the citadel of *Diarbekir*, a billet of this sort put an end to a troublesome croaking of frogs. A man of eminence in Aleppo distributes every year, gratis, billets for freeing houses from flies. The efficacy of these billets depends on the day, the hour, and the particular condition of the messenger who is sent to ask for them. Old women continue to use them, however often they fail, being simple enough to suppose always that some of the conditions requisite to the efficacy of the billets have been wanting when they have been unsuccessful. These billets are not the worse for being written by a Jew or a Christian. Being thought an astrologer, I was often asked for such. These billets are at least no worse than those for making hens lay, which  
were

were publicly sold by a Jesuit, in the middle of the eighteenth century, and among enlightened nations.

The science of *Ramle* is properly the art of fortune-telling. Jews, as well as Muffulmans, deal in it. When a man falls sick, his friends, in order to learn whether he will recover, send to consult a Mullah, who returns an answer, after examining his book, and receives for his pains a cock or a sheep.

The Sunnite clergy condemn the practice of these two last sciences; yet they are tolerated, because they afford a livelihood to a great number of poor scribes. As the Arabians are in general covetous, men of wealth and distinction too often practise these low arts for gaining money.

A science truly occult, and which every Arabian of worth must hold in abhorrence, is what they call *Sihhr*, or pure open forcery. The end of this science is rather to do mischief to another person than to do good to the person who practises it. It is sometimes employed, however, to seduce a wife from the arms of her husband into those of a stranger. All that is requisite for this is to fix a certain billet on her door. The inhabitants of Oman are peculiarly skilled in this execrable science: Yet they are certainly inferior to our European forcerers; for  
they

they know nothing of the art of riding through the air on a broomstick, or of nocturnal assemblies under the presidency of the devil.

I found in Arabia more votaries than I expected of an occult science of a different sort, the pursuit of the philosopher's stone. The Arabians are so passionately addicted to this science, which is the object of their highest wishes, and most eager researches, that they often ruin their fortunes by it, as the alchemists of Europe have been accustomed to do. They suppose the secret of making gold to be known in Europe, especially among the Venetians. They have books in their own language which treat of that science, and inspire them with wild hopes. It should seem, that the idea of the philosopher's stone is originally oriental, and has been brought westward, like many other foolish fables.

At Beit el Fakih, we became acquainted with two alchemists, who wrought each by the precepts of a particular book. The one, who was an amiable, and, in all other respects, a sensible man, was sure of success, as he imagined, if he could find a certain herb, which he believed to grow on the hills of Yemen. As he supposed us to be likewise alchemists, and to have come on purpose to seek that wonderful herb, he cultivated the intimacy of Mr Foskal, and was of great use to him in his botanical excursions;  
but

but the poor man, who has already wasted all his own substance, and was then working at the expence of a rich nobleman, was not fortunate enough to find the herb he sought. There is said to be an herb on Mount Libanus which communicates a yellow golden hue to the teeth of the goats which graze upon it. The observation of this fact may perhaps have given rise to the opinion of the efficacy of an herb in promoting the great work.

The other of these Arabian alchemists was a sort of physician, so poor that he had not wherewith to buy a glass alembic. He believed that he should succeed in making gold if he could discover the meaning of a particular term in his book. Knowing that Mr Von Haven was a linguist, he applied to him for the explanation of a barbarous term which nobody could understand.

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## SECTION XXVIII.

## AGRICULTURE OF THE ARABIANS.

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CHAP. I.*Fertility of the Soil.*

A traveller, who is obliged to spend the greatest part of his time in towns, and has only a transient view of the country, cannot well acquire just ideas of the fertility of the lands, or the modes of cultivation. I neglected no opportunity that offered of obtaining information, concerning the state of agriculture in the East, from such persons as I understood to be best qualified to give it. I shall here set down what came to my knowledge concerning the fertility of Arabia Proper, and of those other countries in which the Arabians have settlements.

The most fertile soil I heard of is in Egypt, and in the lands lying immediately around Alexandria. By the accounts of the European merchants

chants in that city, wheat yields an hundred fold increase ; but the peasants told Mr Forskal, that their most plenteous wheat harvests afforded no greater returns than from thirty to seventy fold, and, in some places, from fifteen to twenty fold. It is at least certain, that the lands of Egypt, although watered by the Nile, afford in all other places only an increase of tenfold. *Granger* never met with a greater produce than this last.

In *Mesopotamia*, in the vicinity of *Kelle*, *Bagdad*, and *Basra*, where the lands are watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris, it is thought a singularly good crop when the increase is twenty-fold ; nobody remembers having seen thirty-fold produced.

In the plains of Assyria, at *Erbil*, and in the neighbourhood of *Mosul*, the cultivated grounds yield only a return of ten or fifteen to one. But corn of these countries, which are watered solely by rain, is of a better quality, and produces more meal than what grows upon fields artificially watered. Fifteen fold is better in Assyria than twenty fold in Mesopotamia. In the neighbourhood of *Diarbekir*, the ordinary wheat-crop is from four to fifteen fold.

An inhabitant of *Merdan* assured me that he reaped fifty for one in barley ; a return which he himself considered as extraordinary ; the usual

usual increase being only from seven to fifteen. Upon more particular inquiry respecting this fact, I learned that there were in this country two different sorts of barley, the common and black barley. The latter serves best for the use of cattle, and yields fifty fold; while the increase of the common barley never exceeds fifteen fold. There are likewise two sorts of wheat, one of which yields a larger return than the other, and yet is seldom sown, because it exhausts the ground more.

In Syria, near Aleppo, nobody could recollect more than one harvest that had yielded above twenty to one. The peasants between *Saïde* and *Damascus*, and those about Bethlehem, had never, in their best years even, reaped more than from twelve to fifteen fold increase.

In Arabia, in the environs of Maskat, wheat yields ten to one. In the province of Yemen, agriculture seems to be farther advanced than in the other parts of the East. I was assured, that, in the best cultivated districts, wheat yields an increase of fifty fold; *durra*, in the highlands, an hundred and forty; and in the Tehama, from two hundred even to four hundred. The latter product may appear incredible; but, by their mode of sowing and watering this grain, the inhabitants of the Tehama reap three successive crops from the same field, in the



same year. *Durra* is, in general, the most productive grain. *Granger* says, that, on the banks of the Nile, it yields fifty to one.

These particulars may afford some general idea of the productive powers of land in the East. The ancients, and some modern travellers, with a view, it should seem, to garnish their works with wonders, have related things absolutely incredible of the fertility of these regions. Their calculations have either been intentionally enlarged beyond the truth, or the natives have imposed upon them.

Yet it is not impossible to bring their accounts within the bounds of probability. It is a vague way of estimating the fertility of any soil, to say that the produce is in such a proportion to the seed. Skilful modes of tilling and sowing may give a great saving of seed, as I shall soon have occasion to remark, when speaking of the agriculture of the peasants of Yemen. If, then, a piece of ground, where one half of the seed has been lost through the unskilfulness of the sower, yet produces ten fold in the crop, another piece of ground, of the same degree of fertility, and sown with only half the quantity of seed, will yield twenty for one, and will consequently seem, upon a hasty consideration, to be twice as fertile. This circumstance does not appear to have been duly attended to, by either the ancients or the

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the moderns, in their accounts of the fertility of distant countries.

Neither do they state what sort of grain they allude to in their calculations of the produce of the lands. We have seen that there is a great difference between the increase of wheat and that of *durra*. The latter grain, a sort of coarse millet, known in Denmark by the name of *Sargo*, has been found in Europe to be friendly to the fertility of the lands on which it is sown; but being of little value, in comparison with our other grains, it is now very seldom sown. In the East, it appears to have been in use from time immemorial. The Arabians use it as their chief article of food. It is sown in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. The peasants of Syria and Palestine sell their wheat, and live upon *durra*. It should seem, therefore, that what some authors have related concerning the astonishing fertility of some countries in the East, is to be understood of this *durra*.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Modes of Plowing and Sowing.*

THE soil not being every where alike good, and the climate varying greatly through the countries of the East, the modes of cultivation here practised are also considerably diversified. In Egypt, Assyria, Mesopotamia, and Syria, agriculture is very much neglected; and these provinces are so thinly inhabited, that much valuable land is suffered to lie waste.

In Arabia, the government of which is less inauspicious to agricultural industry, husbandry is in a more prosperous condition. Yet the instruments of husbandry are, even here, coarse and ill made. The plough used is of a very simple structure, is drawn by oxen, and is dragged over the ground in every direction, till the soil seems to be sufficiently broken and loosened for the reception of the seed. In the neighbourhood of Bagdad, I saw asses yoked in the plough with oxen; and near Mosul, two mules. In cultivating their gardens, and such spots in their fields as are not accessible to the plough, the Arabians use a sort of hoe, and in digging very deep, a large crow, managed by two men,  
one

one of whom presses it in the ground, and the other draws it towards himself with cords.

In many parts in Yemen, whole fields are cultivated like a garden. Agriculture is in such places, however, a very laborious task, for much care is requisite in watering the grounds. In the highland part of this province, the fields are often formed into terraces, and watered in the rainy season by canals from the hills. The inhabitants of the plain are obliged to encompass their fields with dykes, in order that the water may remain for some time upon the surface of the ground. I have already described both these modes of watering the fields, in the narrative of my journies to Zebid, and in the highlands.

The inhabitants of the upper parts of Yemen collect the water necessary for their fields in dams formed at the foot of the hills. Beside private dams, there are likewise very large public reservoirs, formed by carrying a wall between two hills. In the plain of *Damar*, the fields are watered out of very deep draw-wells, from which the water is drawn by strength of arm. It is surprising that the Arabians adopt not the hydraulic machines which are used by their neighbours in Egypt, and in India.

I saw them sow in the highlands of Yemen. A peasant bearing a sackful of lentiles, dropped them here and there in the furrows, just as we  
sow

sow peas in our gardens ; and, as he went on, covered the seed by pushing in the mould with his feet from both sides. In other places, the sower followed the ploughman, and cast the seed into the furrow, which the other returning covered up with his plough. Both these modes of sowing are exceedingly troublesome ; for the sower must make as many turns backwards and forwards as there are furrows ; but there is a saving in the quantity of the seed, no part of which can be withered by the winds, or pecked up by birds. In Arabia in general, only a small quantity of seed is used ; the peasant, trusting to the regularity of the seasons, does not expose his grain to perish in the ground, by sowing it at an improper time. This is another proof of the fallacious nature of inferences concerning the fertility of ground, deduced from the proportion between the seed and the increase.

In some districts in Yemen, maize and durra are planted with the hand. I saw likewise, in the highlands, between *Mofhak* and *Sehan*, some fields in which those grains grew in rows, like our cabbages in Europe. They were the finest fields I ever saw in my life. The stalks were all of the same height, and every plant was thriving and luxuriant. In adjoining fields were some unpromising enough crops of the same grain, which is a proof that the Arabian peasants

peasants are not all alike industrious. The corn-fields in the places about Beit el Fakih were also full of cockle weeds, and irregularly sown.

Near Mount *Mharras* I saw a peasant draw furrows with a small plough between straight rows of corn, of which the stalks were from nine to ten inches high. His oxen were so yoked, that they passed between the rows without treading down any of the plants. The intention of this piece of labour was to destroy weeds, to cover the roots of the plants with earth, and to open the soil for the reception of moisture. The weeds which still remained were pulled up with the hand, and given to cattle. Thus the husbandry of *Tull* and *Du Hamel*, although novel in Europe, is very old in Arabia.

For the preservation of the grain, care must be taken to drive away birds, and the destructive animals. To this end, the peasants watch their fields by turns. In the highlands, he who watches seats himself on a tree; in the Tehama, on a sort of scaffold, having a roof raised over it.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Harvest.*

THE beginning of the harvest varies greatly through Arabia, not only by reason of the differences of the latitude of places, but chiefly in consequence of the diversities of their situations as to high and low, and the different times in the season at which it becomes convenient to water them respectively. Even within the narrow extent of the Imam of Sana's dominions, there are great differences in this respect. At Sana, their barley was cut down on the 15th of July, while at *Chamis*, nearer the mountains, the lentiles were then but a sowing. In the plain of *Beit el Fakih*, the durra was seven feet high on the first days of August; and, at the same time, the fields were ploughed and watered for a second seed in the valley of Zebid, which is only a very short day's journey from *Beit el Fakih*.

At Maskat, wheat and barley are sown in December, and reaped about the end of March; but durra is sown in August, and reaped in the end of the month of November. The date trees are fecundated in the month of December; and,

as Oman produces several sorts of this fruit which ripen successively, the inhabitants have fresh dates during the three months of February, March, and April.

In Egypt, the lands adjoining to the canals are sown in October, and the corn is ripe in the end of February. Lands which cannot be watered from the Nile are sown in November; and, in this last case, the wheat is ripe in February, and the barley in March. At *Mosul*, the barley may be cut in the beginning of the month of May, and the wheat within forty days after. All different grains are ripe at Bagdad twenty-four days sooner than at *Mosul*.

The Arabians pull up their ripe corn by the roots, but cut with a sickle green corn, grass, and whatever they intend as forage for their cattle. The indians use the same instrument in cutting their rice, and pruning their cocoa trees. Both nations have a very simple mode of sharpening their sickles. They pour water among a quantity of sand, and rub the blade with this sand till it is sufficiently sharpened.

In threshing their corn, the Arabians lay the sheaves down in a certain order, and then lead over them two oxen dragging a large stone. This mode of separating the ears from the straw is not unlike that of Egypt, of which I have



spoken in my description of the manners of that country.

In Syria, the sheaves are spread in the open fields ; and oxen drag over them a plank loaded with stones.

The Arabians being less superstitious than the Jews, make no scruple of sowing a field with a mixture of different grains, whenever they suppose that this may be done with advantage.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Domestic Animals.*

IN Arabia are abundance of all the domestic animals common in hot countries. The Arabians breed horses, mules, asses, camels, dromedaries, cows, buffaloes, sheep, and goats. In the fertile provinces, wild fowls are so plentiful that they are sold at a trifling price.

Of all their domestic animals, it is well known that the Arabians put the greatest value on their horses. Of these they have two great branches, the *Kadischi*, whose descent is unknown, and the *Kochlani*, of whom a written genealogy has been kept for two thousand years. The *Kadischi* are in no better estimation than our European horses,

horses, and are usually employed in bearing burthens, and in ordinary labour.

The *Kochlani* are reserved for riding solely. They are highly esteemed, and consequently are very dear. They are said to derive their origin from King Solomon's studs. However this may be, they are fit to bear the greatest fatigues, and can pass whole days without food. They are also said to show uncommon courage against an enemy. It is even asserted, that when a horse of this race finds himself wounded, and unable to bear his rider much longer, he retires from the fray, and conveys him to a place of security. If the rider falls upon the ground, his horse remains beside him, and neighs till assistance is brought. The *Kochlani* are neither large nor handsome, but amazingly swift: It is not for their figure, but for their velocity, and other good qualities, that the Arabians esteem them.

These *Kochlani* are bred chiefly by the Bedouins settled between *Basra*, *Merdin*, and *Syria*, in which countries the nobility never choose to ride horses of any other race. The whole race is divided into several families, each of which has its proper name: That of *Dsjulfa* seems to be the most numerous. Some of these families have a higher reputation than others, on account of their more ancient and uncontaminated

minated nobility. Although it is known, by experience, that the *Kochlani* are often inferior to the *Kadifchi*, yet the mares at least, of the former, are always preferred, in the hopes of a fine progeny.

The Arabians have indeed no tables of genealogy to prove the descent of their *Kochlani*; yet they are sure of the legitimacy of the progeny; for a mare of this race is never covered unless in the presence of witnesses, who must be Arabians. This people do not indeed always stickle at perjury; but in a case of such serious importance, they are careful to deal conscientiously. There is no instance of false testimony given in respect to the descent of a horse. Every Arabian is persuaded that himself and his whole family would be ruined, if he should prevaricate in giving his oath in an affair of such consequence.

A Christian, having a *Kochlani* mare whom he wishes to have covered by a stallion of the same race, is obliged to employ an Arabian witness, who must watch the mare twenty days, to be sure that she has been defiled by the embraces of no common horse. During all this time, she must not see either horse or ass, even at a distance. When the mare produces her foal, the same Arabian must be present; and within the first seven days, a notorial certificate  
of

of the legitimate birth of the foal is made. If there happens to be a crossing of the two breeds, the foal, whether the father or the mother be *Kochlani*, is always esteemed *Kadischi*.

The Arabians make no scruple of selling their *Kochlani* stallions like other horses; but they are unwilling to part with their mares for money. When not in a condition to support them, they dispose of them to others, on the terms of having a share in the foals, or of being at liberty to recover them, after a certain time.

These *Kochlani* are much like the old Arabian nobility, the dignity of whose birth is held in no estimation unless in their own country. These horses are little valued by the Turks. Their country being more fertile, better watered, and less level, swift horses are less necessary to them than to the Arabians. They prefer large horses, who have a stately appearance when sumptuously harnessed. It should seem that there are also *Kochlani* in *Hedsjas*, and in the country of *Dsjof*; but I doubt if they be in estimation in the dominions of the Imam, where the horses of men of rank appeared to me too handsome to be *Kochlani*. The English, however, sometimes purchase these horses at the price of 800 or 1000 crowns each. An English merchant

was offered at Bengal twice the purchase money for one of these horses; but he sent him to England, where he hoped that he would draw four times the original price.

There are two sorts of asses in Arabia; the smaller or lazy ass, as little esteemed here as in Europe; and a large and high spirited breed, who are highly valued. These latter are sold at a high price. I thought them fitter for a journey than horses are.

I have reason to believe, that, in Arabia, are several sorts of camels. Those in the dominions of the Imam are of a moderate size, and a light brown colour. Those from *Nedsjeran* are large, lubbardly, and of a dark brown colour. The dromedaries of Egypt and Arabia have only one bunch upon the back; and, by such as have not often seen them, can be distinguished from camels only by an air of lightness, which makes them seem fitter for running. I never but once saw dromedaries with two bunches, and that was in a town in Natolia, to which those I saw had been brought from the Crimea; but they were so large and lubbardly, that they seemed to me rather camels of a particular species, than dromedaries.

Buffaloes are to be found in all the marshy countries of the East, and on the banks of the rivers.

rivers. They are even more numerous than the common horned cattle. I have seen animals of this species in Egypt, at Bombay, near the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Orontes, &c. The female buffalo yields more milk than the common cow ; and the male is as fit for the yoke as our oxen. His flesh is indeed inferior to that of the ox, being hard and ill tasted. European merchants are however obliged to use it in the countries where those animals are numerous. I believe that I have often eaten the flesh of a young buffalo without distinguishing it by the taste or appearance from our beef. The Arabians have a mode of forcing the female buffalo to yield more milk than she voluntarily does, which the ancient Scythians also practised with their mares. While one milks the cow, another tickles her.

The oxen and cows of Arabia have upon the shoulder, immediately above the fore-legs, a lump or bunch of fat ; the bunch of the camel grows larger, or diminishes, as the animal becomes fatter or leaner. I could obtain no particular information concerning the instinct ascribed to these oxen, of forming into circular bodies, to defend themselves against beasts of prey. The story is so much the less probable, because the cattle of Arabia are distinguished by remarkably small horns.

The

The Arabians have no meadows which might afford grafs for the feeding of thefe domestic animals. The country is too much parched for the grafs to become luxuriant enough to be ufed as hay. Straw, barley, and beans, are the articles of food upon which they nourish their cattle. The only herb they fow exprefsly for this purpofe is a fort of bean or *phafeolus* ; the Egyptians, whose country is better watered, fow trefoil for the fame ufe. The camel eats the moft ftunted and withered roots. In Arabia, however, he lives chiefly on herbs of the gourd fpecies, which abound in the driefest countries.

SECT.

## SECTION XXIX.

## NATURAL HISTORY OF ARABIA.

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CHAP. I.*General Reflections on the Natural History of Arabia*

ONE principal object which it became our party of travellers to keep in view, was undoubtedly the examination of the natural productions of the country through which we travelled. Every member of our company having had his particular task assigned to him, the investigation of subjects of natural history was particularly appropriated to the late Mr Forskal. His well known activity, abilities, and ardour for the cultivation of science, afforded the public room to expect from him numerous discoveries in the natural history, as well of Egypt, as of Arabia; countries which he had time to examine before his premature death. But, our hopes have been in part disappointed, by the concurrence of differ-



ent unfavourable circumstances, which it may be proper to give an account of here, both in excuse for the deficiency of this article, and as an encouragement to future travellers to perfect what was so successfully begun by our deceased friend.

The time prescribed for our continuance in the East was short in the whole ; and an unforeseen delay in Egypt farther abridged that portion of it which we had destined to be spent in Arabia. In consequence of this circumstance, we had no more time for examining the natural history of Arabia than the six months between the end of December 1762, and the beginning of June 1763, at the last of which periods Mr Forkal died. Hence many objects could be only cursorily observed. Besides, the frequent indisposition of some or other of our party obliged us often to separate ; and a reason of this nature hindered Mr Forkal from seeing Mount Sinai, and the productions of that part of Arabia Petræa.

The climate and soil of several of the countries which we visited are less favourable, than is commonly supposed, for the increase of vegetables and animals. The soil of Arabia is, through a great part of that country, dry and sandy, produces no plants, and is therefore unfit for the nourishment of animals. Here the naturalist

turalist finds but few objects to observe; and of such a country the natural history can never be extensive. In Arabia, likewise, the heat of the sun is so intense, that the flowers no sooner blow than they are withered; and if the botanist, attentive to a number of plants at once, misses the precise moment when any one which is new to him is in flower, he can have no subsequent opportunity of examining it till the ensuing season.

This inconvenience might be avoided by observing the plants in gardens. But there is perhaps no country in the world where gardening is so much neglected as in Arabia. There is hardly a single small garden in the neighbourhood even of the greatest towns. At Beit el Fakih there is only one, which was formed by an old Dola. The Arabians, a simple frugal race, content themselves with the plainest food, without taking pains to furnish themselves with a variety of dishes. What seems to give them an aversion for the culture of gardens is the long droughts, which last sometimes for more than a year, and destroy every sprout of vegetation, together with the ravages of the grasshoppers, which complete the devastation of the fields. The Banians, being by their religion confined to a vegetable diet, plant great quantities of pulse; but these are mostly of species that are natives of India,

India, and by consequence already known to botanists.

Beside these physical obstacles to the investigation of the natural history of the East, there is another, arising from the moral character of the people who inhabit these regions. The Arabians, an ignorant, covetous, and jealous race, cannot comprehend how the Europeans should be prompted by mere curiosity to expose themselves to so much danger and fatigue. They ascribe to them a motive of interest, the desire of discovering hidden treasures, with great skill in the search. The idea generally prevalent among them, of the wealth of travellers, makes a curious person run a great risk of being plundered by vagabond robbers. Mr Forskal, escaping once with difficulty out of the clutches of a band of these robbers in Egypt, and being once plundered by another party, was obliged to cease from his scientific excursions. He found means, indeed, to have plants gathered for him, by an Arabian, in the neighbourhood of Kahira. But the naturalist makes his observations best upon living plants, in their native situations.

Our friend was luckier, in this respect, in Yemen, where the safety of a stranger is better secured by the laws, and the manners of the people of the country. The Arabians in Yemen were

so far from offering him any interruptions in his pursuits, that both men and women, of all ranks and ages, appeared to take pleasure in bringing, pointing out, and naming to him all their indigenous plants. A people living the life of shepherds, and of husbandmen, like the Arabians, who spend almost all their time in the open fields, naturally acquire a taste for botany, and a degree of skill in its researches. But, in order to obtain the aid, and even the friendship of these good people, he was obliged to conform to their manners, and to content himself with their scanty cheer. A life of such abstinence and fatigue, too severe for a person brought up in European habits, undoubtedly contributed to shorten the days of our friend.

In spite of all these obstacles, Mr Forskal's ardent industry was successful beyond our hopes. It is inconceivable in what a short time he discovered and made descriptions of full three hundred species in the animal kingdom, and of more than eight hundred in the vegetable. This number might have been yet more considerable, had he not laid it down as a rule to himself, to describe nothing which he had not examined with the most scrupulous exactness. For this reason had he put off, till he should be at more leisure, the examination of a large collection of insects and shells. With the same intention, he had  
preserve:

preserved, in spirit of wine, a great many fishes and amphibious animals. But the reader will recollect the fate of this collection, when our goods were inspected at the custom-house at Mokha, as above related.

After my return to Europe, I was intrusted with the task of publishing my friend's posthumous papers. I then discovered a new loss which natural history had suffered by his death. He had been accustomed to write down his observations on small detached pieces of paper, which could not easily be preserved together. It is true, I found 1800 of these billets, which I endeavoured to reduce into order. But I could not help inferring from the chasms here and there, that many of them were lost. Whether it be or be not so, I have, however, presented to the public all that I could recover, in two Latin works, intituled, *Descriptiones Animalium*, 4to, Hafniæ, 1775 ; and *Flora Arabica*, 4to, ib. 1775.

These two works, written in Latin, and in the manner and arrangement of *Linnaeus*, are intended particularly for the use of the learned naturalist. To gratify readers of all classes, I shall here insert the most curious particular of the information contained in those works, and such as will serve to give the best ideas of the productions, common or peculiar, of the countries which we traversed.

traversed. Although natural history was not my province, I had occasion to observe transiently many things respecting it. I shall, therefore, intermingle my own remarks, without distinguishing them as such; for the greater part of the whole is Mr Forskal's.

## CHAP. II.

### *Climate and Soil of Arabia.*

A COUNTRY, such as Arabia, extending from the  $30^{\circ}$  to the  $13^{\circ}$  of northern latitude, and, by consequence, situate partly between the tropics, will be naturally supposed subject to a very hot climate. In some provinces of Arabia, the heat is excessive. But, in this country, as in most others, the varying degrees of elevation, the relative situations of places, and the nature of the soil, occasion considerable varieties of temperature.

Before a person can understand these varieties, it is necessary that he should have a just idea of the physical circumstances of Arabia. This country may be considered as a pile of mountains, encircled with a belt of flat, dry, and sandy ground. Towards the north and the continent, this belt is formed by the deserts of Syria,

ria, and Arabia Petræa. The plains called *Tebema* by the Arabians, and extending from the sea-shore to the hills, bound Arabia on those sides on which it is washed by the waters of the Red Sea, of the Eastern Ocean, and of the Persian Gulph.

In these deserts, diversified here and there only by bare rocks, and in these flat plains, there is nothing to soften the force of the sun's rays, but all vegetables are burnt up, and the soil is every where reduced to sand. The drought is so extreme, that whole years will pass without rain; and the torrents which fall from the hills are lost among the sands long before they can reach the sea. Were it not for these river-waters, which being swelled in the rainy season, are drained off to fertilize the lands, the husbandman would be unable to raise even those scanty crops which his harvests at present afford. By observations made with good thermometers, we found, that in these plains, as, for instance, at Loheya, Mokha, and Maskat, the heats were as intense as in any other hot country whatever.

In the interior country, the temperature of the atmosphere is very different. The great ranges of lofty mountains attract vapours; and these falling down in plenteous rains cool the air, and quicken vegetation. The cold occasion-  
ed

ed by the height of the country, produces falls of snow; but this never lies long upon the ground. While the inhabitants of the plains suffer by heat, those of the hills are obliged to wrap themselves in pellices. We were assured that there was ice on some of the hills, and that, at Sana, which lies among the hills in the interior country, there was sometimes frost.

The position of these mountains in the middle of a peninsula, occasions likewise another phenomenon that is equally observable in the peninsula formed by the Ganges, which is in the same manner intersected by mountains. The rainy seasons, which are regular in the countries between the tropics, are, by this peculiarity of situation, diversified here. Westward, in Yemen, the rainy season is of great service to the country; for it comes on in the month of June, and terminates in the middle of September; in which months the heats are most violent, and the earth and its inhabitants in the greatest need of such refreshment. In the eastern part of these mountains, on the side of Maskat, those rains fall between the middle of the month of November and the middle of February. In *Hadramaut* and *Oman*, to the south, the rainy season lasts from the middle of February to the middle of April. It should seem, therefore, that the rains make the tour of the peninsula



every season, as impelled by the prevalent winds. In the Tehama of Yemen, we heard also of a rain in spring, the period of which is uncertain, but on which the success of the harvests depends.

These regular rains render the vallies lying among the mountains fertile and delightful. The highlanders, who breathe a fine fresh air, are handsome, healthy, and brave. Another advantage which the Arabians owe to the situation of their country, is, that it affords them at the same time the productions of different climates. In the plains, several vegetables transplanted from India thrive well enough, and many of the animals of hot countries multiply there. The mountains produce the plants and animals of temperate climates. Arabia may thus be regarded as an assemblage of different climates, the respective advantages of which are all to be found in the tract lying between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulph.

The nature of the winds differs, in Arabia, with the point of the compass from which they blow, and the tract over which they respectively pass. The same wind is, in different places, dry or moist, according as it blows over the ocean, or over deserts. On the shores of the Persian Gulph, the south-east wind is accompanied with a degree of moisture which, when the heat is  
intense,

intense, occasions violent sweatings; the north-west, passing over the great desert, is more torrid, but less disagreeable; this lust wind heats metals in the shade, as if they were exposed to the sun; and its heat, suddenly added to that of the atmosphere, often suffocates men and other animals. The Arabians, when they travel, carry with them garlic and dried grapes, for the purpose of reviving such persons as may fall down fainting, from the effect of these hot blasts.

Notwithstanding its torrid qualities, this north-west wind serves to cool their liquors for the Arabians, in the middle of Summer. In order to this, they put their water into *bardaks*, or unglazed pots, made of a sort of porous earth; and then, having these pots in a place exposed to the current of this hot wind, the water is thus rendered very cool; a circumstance well-known in hot countries, and at present ascribed by naturalists to the effects of sudden evaporation.

Another wind, of a more dangerous nature, is the famous *Sam*, *Smum*, or *Samiel*, which seldom blows within Arabia, but frequently upon its frontiers. This wind prevails only on the confines of the great desert, where the agitation of the air forms a current for the vapours which are raised by the heat of the sun from that parched territory. The places the most exposed to this destructive

destructive wind, are the banks of the Euphrates, and sometimes the environs of Mecca, when the north wind blows from the desert. It is not unknown in Persia, on the borders of those arid plains; and it is said to have been felt in some places in Spain, near the vast tracts of desert sands which deform that fine kingdom. The effects of the *Simum* are instant suffocation to every living creature that happens to be within the sphere of its activity, and immediate putrefaction of the carcases of the dead. As a similar rapidity of putrefaction has been observed to take place upon bodies deprived of life by thunder, or by the electric shock, it has been conjectured, that electrical matter, which is very generally diffused through nature, might be the cause of the peculiarly noxious qualities of this wind. The Arabians discern the approach of the *Simum* by an unusual redness in the air; and they say that they feel a smell of sulphur as it passes. However this may be, the only means by which any person can preserve himself from suffering from the noxious blasts, is, by throwing himself down with his face upon the earth, till this whirlwind of poisonous exhalations has blown over; which always moves at a certain height in the atmosphere. Instinct even teaches the brutes to incline their heads to the ground on these occasions.

The

The other meteors of Arabia are common to it with all other hot countries. A clear sky, seldom obscured by clouds, renders storms very unfrequent in the plains. The air discharges its electric matter in globes of fire, and by the phenomena called shooting stars, which are not unfrequent, and of considerable bulk. In the most acid tracts, near the sea, the dews are singularly copious. But, notwithstanding this humidity, the air is so pure, that the inhabitants sleep in the open air; I never slept sounder than where I found my bed all wet with dew in the morning. There are, however, places where one dares not sleep in the open air for fear of being struck with a palsy. By long experience the inhabitants of those parts have learned what precautions to take, and these are always peculiarly necessary to an European unaccustomed to the climate.

Arabia enjoys the prospect of almost constant verdure. Not but that most of the trees shed their leaves, and the annual plants wither and are re-produced. But, the interval between the fall of the leaf in one year, and the re-production of new leaves for the next, is so short, that the change is hardly observable. Continual verdure is peculiar to those countries in which there are no frosts, but a rainy season instead of our winter.

From

From the singular local situation of Arabia, the inequalities in the nature of its lands may, without farther information, be inferred. These inequalities are indeed very remarkable. On one side are frightful deserts, and on the other fertile and delightful vales. The sandy belt which encircles this peninsula is almost entirely barren, and presents one unvaried picture of desolation.

This belt, denominated Tehama, as has been several times mentioned, begins at Suez, and extends round the whole peninsula, to the mouth of the Euphrates. Its breadth varies; it is, however, for the most part, about two days journey from the sea-shore to the rise of the hills; at least this is the breadth of the plain adjacent to the Red Sea. It bears every mark of having been anciently a part of the bed of the sea. Its bottom soil is a greyish clay, with a large proportion of sand, and having marine exuviae interspersed to a great distance from the sea-shore. It contains large strata of salt, which in some places even rise up into hills. Its regular inclination towards the sea indicates that it has emerged gradually. The small eminences upon the confines of this plain are composed of calcareous stones, having a blackish appearance, and seeming as if they were burnt by the sun. The adjoining hills contain schistus and basalt; in

in this differing greatly from the strata of the hills on the opposite coast of Egypt, and from those of Arabia Petræa, which are chiefly made up of granite.

The sea, no doubt, still continues to recede; and the Tehama is on that side gradually extending its limits. The banks of coral are still increasing, and coming nearer to the shore, so as to render the navigation of the gulph every day more and more dangerous. The sand accumulated by the billows gradually fills up the intermediate space, and joins these beds of coral to the continent, as appears from some recent instances. History also records proofs of this gradual recession of the waters; and mentions, as sea-ports, several places which are at present inland, without noticing the present maritime towns, which must undoubtedly be of later origin than the formation of the land on which they stand.

Such a conquest over the watery element promises, however, little advantage to man. These newly formed lands are ungrateful and barren. Nor can any better be sanguinely hoped of the future; since the territory of the Tehama has remained for so many ages unchanged in its nature. Mr Forskal fancied that he could distinguish a similarity between the soil of *Hedsjar* and that of Egypt, from which he inferred, that  
the

the sterility of the former was owing to the want of water. But he was certainly mistaken; for the soil of Egypt is formed of the sediment of the Nile, but that of Hedsjas of the remains of the bed of the sea. The calcareous stone of the hills of this latter province is, however, decomposed into a blackish earth, which in time becomes fit to bear some coarse vegetables.

In the Highlands of Arabia, there are as great diversities of soil as in most other cultivated countries. The most general character of the soil on these schistous hills is clay mixed with sand. But the figure of the hills is unfavourable to their fertility. They are commonly so craggy and precipitous, as to afford neither room nor soil for vegetable-productions, the good earth being continually washed away by the waters. These circumstances have likewise the effect of rendering the culture of such places extremely difficult and expensive. Terraces are necessary to be formed; of which indeed the construction is sometimes facilitated by the piles of basaltes naturally cast into regular pentagonal figures, which are broken, from time to time, from the rocks, and serve as materials for the walls.

Arabia is a country interesting in many respects; but is, in general, neither rich nor fertile.

tile. The laborious life, and indifferent fate of its inhabitants, are sufficient proofs of this truth. If it was called *Happy* by the ancients, it was only by the value and the novelty, not by the abundance of its productions, that it could merit this name.

### CHAP. III

#### *Arabian Quadrupeds.*

**S**PEAKING of the agriculture of the Arabians, I had occasion to mention their domestic animals. Of those, some appear to be originally natives of the country, for they are not common through the other regions of the east; they retain their primary instincts in higher perfection, and are more eminently distinguished by strength and beauty here than elsewhere. Such are the horse, the ass, the camel, and perhaps too the ox. The camel, by its power of enduring thirst, and its containing a reservoir for water in its bowels, seems naturally destined for an inhabitant of the desert. Its hoof is formed to tread on burning sands; and the cartilaginous texture of its mouth enables it to feed on the hard and prickly plants of those parched plains.



The afs, especially, seems to be a native of Arabia. Here are a species of asses, which, in beauty, vigour, and spirit, are no contemptible rivals to the horse. The inhabitants speak likewise of a wild animal, called *Djæar*, of the same size and shape as the afs, the flesh of which is excellent food.

This animal is probably a wild afs, who, in consequence of living in a state of independence, acquires some varieties of form, which the Arabs, in their unskilfulness in natural history, mistake for the characteristics of a different animal.

The Arabians give the name of *Bakar Uafel* to an animal which we did not see, but of which their vague description can be referred only to the wild ox. They speak of another animal of the form of an ox, which is destitute of horns, and feeds only by night.

On the lofty hills of Arabia Petræa, are rock-goats. The plains are stocked with *gazelles*; and this beautiful creature is so common, that the Arabian poets draw from it many of their allusions and similitudes. The hare is not a common animal here, and is to be seen only in some mountainous parts. In the sandy tracks are numbers of those little animals called *Jerboa's*, Pharaoh's rats, whose flesh the Arabians eat without any dislike. The peculiarity in  
the

The structure of the hinder feet of these animals, and their manner of leaping, which have induced our naturalists to give the species the name of *Mus Jaculus*, are well known.

In the forests, in the south of Arabia, are monkies without tails, whose back parts are bare and red. I saw these animals in troops of some hundreds. Other travellers have met with them in thousands on the hills of Aden. These creatures are docile, and easily learn any trick which is attempted to be taught them. On this account numbers of them are exported to Egypt, where jugglers exhibit them to the people.

Of carnivorous animals, the most hideous and formidable is the *Hyæna*, who attacks men and beasts with the same ferocity. This fierce and solitary animal inhabits the caverns of the desert mountains of Arabia Petraea, and is also common round the shores of the Persian Gulph. The hyæna marches out only at night, in that season when the inhabitants of the country sleep in the open air, and often carries off children from beside their parents.

As the domestic animals on the southern coast of the Persian Gulph are chiefly fed upon fishes, the hyæna is sometimes obliged to content himself with the same food. On my return into Europe, I saw in Denmark one of these

these animals alive, in the king's collection of wild animals.

The leopard, reckoned by Mr Forskal among the carnivorous animals, is perhaps the same as the panther, (*Felis pardus Linnæi*); the more probably so, as he gives it the Arabic name of the panther, *Nemer*. However, the ounce or small panther, named in Arabic *Fath*, is still more common than the large one; neither is it regarded with any sort of terror in Arabia, where it carries away cats and dogs, but never ventures to attack men.

Wild boars, wolves, and foxes, are to be found in Arabia; but the most common carnivorous animal is a sort of wild dog, more like the fox than the household-dog, and named by the Turks *Tschakal*, by the Arabians *El Varr*. This animal, common through all the countries of the East, is so well known, that I need not here add any thing concerning its figure and manners.

Mr Forskal names several other animals of which he knew nothing, except what he gathered from the indistinct accounts of the natives; and some others of which he could only learn the Arabian names. As such slight notices cannot enlarge the knowledge of nature, I shall not repeat them here. The most singular of those animals, which we knew only by  
hearsay,

hearsay, is one said to resemble a cat, to live upon the hills, to feed on grass, and to be a most delicate article of food.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Birds of Arabia.*

If we had opportunities of examining but few quadrupeds, we were not more fortunate in respect to birds. Not that Arabia is deficient in variety of species; on the contrary, its productions are sufficient to nourish a prodigious number: But a traveller hastening through a country, has it still less in his power to acquaint himself with the inhabitants of the air than with those of the earth. One cannot see many birds, or observe them at leisure, unless among people who are fond of fowling, and who, as they seek for game and sell it, bring to the curious such birds as they have caught or killed. and are able to give some account of their respective names and instincts.

In Arabia we had no such advantage. The Arabians despise the use of wild fowl, and regard neither the amusement nor the exercise of fowling. I thought that I could discern two causes of their aversion for a diversion which  
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the savages of the north pursue with extreme fondness. A people who are naturally sober and frugal, and live in a climate where the use of animal food is injurious to health, cannot be fond of game. The precepts of the Mussulman religion must also disgust the Arabians at the pursuit of wild animals, especially of birds. A hunter loses his labour, and his prey becomes impure, if he has but neglected the repetition of one short prayer when he killed the animal; if it has not lost the just quantity of blood required by the law; if the bird struggled with any remains of life after it was shot; or if it fell upon a place which was either inhabited, or in any manner defiled. We saw no other birds, therefore, than those which we killed ourselves, or those which we could observe while they were at liberty.

In the fertile countries of Arabia, tame fowls are very plentiful, and all sorts of poultry are bred in great abundance. The pintado is not domestic; but these birds inhabit the woods in such numbers, that children kill them with stones, and then collect them to be sold in the towns. The pheasant is likewise a native of Arabia, and is found in great plenty, in the forests of Yemen, as well as the wood-pigeon, and several other varieties of the pigeon species. In the plains of the same province, the grey partridge.

idge, the common lark, and a sort of white crane, having the under part of the belly of a beautiful red, are also to be seen here.

So dry a country as Arabia cannot be supposed to afford a great variety of water fowls. However, in places where there was water, we found a beautiful variety of the plover, and sometimes storks. Sea-fowls, which live upon fish, are numerous on the coasts of the Red sea, because this gulph is very deep, and copiously stored with fishes. Beside some sorts of sea-maws, we saw in an isle of the Red sea pelicans, who had built nests and laid eggs as large as those of the goose.

The deserts of Arabia are not without ostriches, which are called by the inhabitants *Thar Edsjammel*, the camel bird. I did not understand that the Arabians take this bird young, and tame it. One which I saw at Loheya was from Abyssinia. A beautiful lapwing, called by the Arabians *Hudhud*, is also common on the shores of the Persian Gulph. Some Arabians have been persuaded, by a fabulous tradition, that the language of this bird may be understood.

Eagles, falcons, sparrow-hawks, and the Egyptian vulture, (*Vultur Petenopterus Linnæi*), are birds of prey to be met with in Arabia. The last of these is very serviceable in the country; clearing the earth of all carcases, which corrupt very rapidly,

rapidly, and are very noisome in hot countries. He also destroys the field mice, which multiply so prodigiously in some provinces, that, were it not for this assistance; the peasant might cease from the culture of the fields as absolutely vain. Their performance of these important services induced the ancient Egyptians to pay those birds divine honours; and even at present it is held unlawful to kill them, in all the countries which they frequent.

In several countries in the east, as also in Arabia, there is another bird, not less beneficial to the inhabitants. It is thought to be a native of *Korasan*, for it comes annually into Arabia, in pursuit of the swarms of locusts, of which it destroys incredible numbers. It is called *Samarman* or *Samarmog*. Mr Forskal ranks it among the thrushes, and calls it *Turdus Seleucus*. The services done by this bird, in countries exposed to the ravages of those insects, have given rise to several ridiculous and superstitious practices in Syriz. It is thought to be attracted from *Korasan* by water, which is, for this end, brought from a distance with great ceremony, and preserved in a stone reservoir on the top of the tower of a mosque. When this water fails, the inhabitants of Mosul are in despair. But as this bird's instincts prompt it not only to feed on locusts, but to kill as many of them as possible  
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it naturally follows these insects in the course of their passage.

We heard much talk of two species of birds, which are highly valued by the Arabians, and are called *Salva* and *Sumana*. We could discover nothing concerning the generic character of the latter ; but we heard enough of the *Salva* to enable us to understand that it is the rail, a bird of passage which frequents a small district in Arabia. As to quails, we received no evidence of their being birds of passage ; nor is it probable that this bird should traverse deserts where no subsistence is to be found.

The Arabians likewise named to Mr Forskal several other birds, which he never could see, and consequently could not ascertain their genus, such as the *Achjal*, famous for two beautiful feathers, with which the Highlanders adorn their bonnets, and to preserve which uninjured, the bird, it seems, leaves a hole in its nest. Another, the *Thaer el Hind*, rare and remarkable for its gilded plumage, is sold very dear in Arabia. Its name seems to indicate that it is a bird of passage, which is supposed to come from India.



## CHAP. V.

*Of Amphibious Animals and Fishes.*

IN the Arabian seas, we never met with the sea-tortoise ; the land-tortoise is more common ; the peasants bring the latter, by cart-loads, to the markets of several towns in the east. The eastern Christians eat these animals in Lent, and drink their blood with great relish.

We saw several sorts of lizards, of which the only dangerous one was that called by the Egyptians *Gocko*. It is said that the saliva of this creature, falling upon victuals, infects the persons who eat them with the leprosy.

There are in Arabia several sorts of serpents, the bite of which is often mortal. But the innocent are as numerous as the dangerous serpents. Of some the bite occasions only a disagreeable itching, which the Arabians cure by applying the leaves of the caper-tree to the wound. In general, life is endangered only by the bite of such serpents as have a distinct row of teeth larger than the rest of the teeth. The Arabians in Egypt are acquainted with this law in the structure of reptiles, and play safely with serpents, after pulling out the long teeth, which  
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serve to conduct the poison. In Arabia, the only serpent that is truly formidable is that called *Baetan*, a small slender creature, spotted black and white; its bite is instant death, and the dead body is swelled by the poison in a very extraordinary manner.

Mr Forkal discovered in the Red Sea several sorts of Ray-fishes which are unknown in Europe. That sea is in general stored with a great variety of fishes; and I was told by my friend, that in the short passage between Suez and Jidda, he observed more than a hundred new species, only a part of which he could rank among the known genera. He was obliged to form four new genera, which he named *Salaria* *Scarus*, *Signanus*, and *Acanthurus*. A new torpedo which he met with, appeared so different from that already known, that he was induced to class it as a particular genus.

Among the new species are some belonging to genera which are found also in our seas; such are several cod-fishes hitherto unknown; new species of mackerels, mullets, scari, perches. &c. Others of these species belong to genera peculiar to the seas adjacent to hot countries, such as the *Chatodon* and the *Sciaena*.

In our passage over the Red Sea, we saw troops of flying fishes, which rose from time to time above the surface of the water; but we discovered

covered no flying serpent in the course of our voyage ; although the Arabians give this name to a serpent which should rather be called the leaper. This serpent fixes himself by the tail to a low branch of a tree, and then giving himself an impetus, by means of his elastic tail, springs from branch to branch successively, till he reaches the top.

The Arabians inhabiting the shores of the Red Sea live almost entirely on fishes, as I have already had occasion to mention, and even sustain their cattle with the same food. Although fishes are so plentiful, yet a living fish is seldom to be seen among them. For fear of violating some precept of the Mussulman law, the fishermen kill all their fishes before they bring them on shore.

## CHAP VI.

### *insects and Slaves*

THE locusts have a great influence on the condition of the inhabitants of Arabia, and of several other countries in the east ; and, therefore, I shall speak of this insect at a length which others do not merit. We, however, did not find the numbers so great as they are commonly supposed to be in Europe.

In Egypt I saw once only a cloud of locusts, which was brought by a south-wind from the deserts of Lybia; the locusts fell in prodigious quantities on the roofs of the houses, and in the streets of Kahira. I saw no more of them, till at Jidda, in November 1762, a large cloud of locusts was driven over the city by a west-wind. The cloud came from the other side of the Arabic Gulph; and, therefore, many of the insects must have been drowned in their passage. In the month of July following, we found a small quantity near mount *Sumara*, which seemed to have spent the season in Arabia. These swarms often cross the Red Sea a second time, and return to Egypt, the upper part of which adjoining to the deserts of Lybia, seems to be the cradle of these animals. I saw clouds of them in Persia, and Syria; where, in the quarter of Mosul, I found nests of these insects, which a careful police might in a great degree destroy. Small locusts, of the size of a fly, grow with amazing rapidity, and attain their natural size within a few days.

There are undoubtedly various species of this insect, which have not as yet been sufficiently discriminated. Mr Forskal calls the locust which infests Arabia *Gryllus Gregarius*, and thinks it to be different from that which is called by Linnaeus *Gryllus Migratorius*, and which is a native  
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of the deserts of Tartary, from which it passes through the neighbouring countries, into Poland and Germany. The *Gryllus Gregarius* merits this denomination; for the locusts of this species appear to act in concert, and to live and travel in society. Those which remain after the departure of the great body are only irregular stragglers.

The Arabians distinguish several separate species of this insect, to which they give particular names. But these names are not expressive of any qualities in the nature of the animal; as they respect only the delicacy ascribed to its flesh. They give the name *Muken* to the red locust, which is esteemed fatter and more succulent than any of the others; they likewise eat the light locust; but abstain from another, called *Dubbe*, because it has a tendency to produce diarrhœa.

All Arabians, whether living in their native country, or in Persia, Syria, and Africa, are accustomed to eat locusts. The Turks, on the contrary, have an aversion for this sort of food. If the Europeans express any thing of the same aversion, the Arabians then remind us of our fondness for oysters, crabs, and lobsters. A German, who had long resided in Barbary, assured us, that the flesh of this insect tasted like  
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the small fardine of the Baltic Sea, which is dried in some towns of Holstein.

We saw locusts caught, and put into bags, or on strings, to be dried, in several parts of Arabia. In Barbary, they are boiled, and then dried upon the roofs of the houses. The Bedouins of Egypt roast them alive, and devour them with the utmost voracity. We saw no instance of unwholesomeness in this article of food; Mr Forskal was indeed told, that it had a tendency to thicken the blood, and to bring on melancholy habits. The Jews in Arabia are convinced, that the fowls, of which the Israelites ate so largely in the desert, were only clouds of locusts,—and laugh at our translators, who have supposed that they found quails where quails never were.

The swarms of these insects darken the air, and appear at a distance like clouds of smoke. The noise they make in flying is frightful and stunning, like that of a water-fall. When such a swarm falls upon a field, it is wasted, and despoiled of its verdure. The pulse and date-trees suffer greatly from the locusts; but corn, either ripe or nearly so, is too hard for their use, and they are obliged to spare it.

A small insect named *Arda*, of the bulk of a grain of barley (*Termes fatale*, Linn.) is another scourge of Arabia, and of her countries in general.

ral. On account of some general resemblance, many travellers represent this insect as an ant, and speak of it under this name. Its instinct disposes it to travel only by night, through a sort of galleries, which it forms, as it proceeds, of fat earth. After reaching the end of its journey, it corrodes and destroys every thing, victuals, clothes, and furniture. We found an army of these in our chamber, for the first time, at Beit el Fakih. We immediately demolished the galleries which they had formed; but they, without being discouraged, or terrified at our presence, renewed their work in the night, with singular obstinacy, so that we had much ado to rid ourselves of them. They live and work together like ants.

The *arda* is also destructive to trees, the sweetness of whose leaves and fruits gratifies its taste. These insects fix upon trees of this character, and extend their galleries from the root to the top. The inhabitants of the country have no other means for preserving their gardens from utter ruin, except to surround the trees with sheep's dung, the smell of which the *arda* cannot endure.

There are in Arabia many ants, but most of them are harmless as our's. From among these, however, are to be excepted two species, one of which becomes troublesome by the voracity with  
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which it attacks victuals, unless driven away by the odour of camphor ; the other's bite is little less painful than that of the scorpion ; but neither is it more deadly.

A sort of *scolopendra* likewise torments the inhabitants of this country, and affects those on whom it fixes with burning pains. This insect fixes all its feet into the flesh, so that it is impossible to rid one's self of it otherwise than by successively burning all the parts affected with a hot iron. The cuttle-fish is dangerous to swimmers and divers, of whom it lays hold with its long claws. These do not wound, but produce swelling, internal pains, and often an incipient paralysis.

Among the *Tenebriones* is one species which destroys reeds. Probably this small insect attacks likewise the stalks of corn, in which is observed a farina, which serves to diffuse the eggs of this insect through houses. This little animal is therefore one of the most troublesome insects in the country. The women of Arabia and Turkey make use of another tenebrio, which is found among the filth of gardens. As plumpness is thought a beauty in the east, the women, in order to obtain this beauty, swallow, every morning and every evening, three of those insects fried in butter. The Red Sea is full of marine insects ; *Priapi*, *Salpa*, *Fistularcs*, *Medusa*, &c. Mr Forskal became more and more convinced,



in the course of his observations, that the immense numbers of these animals contribute to produce the refulgence which is perceived at night in sea-water. This insect seems to be an animated phosphoric body.

We observed a great many crabs, some of which were species peculiar to the Arabic gulph. The shells are not less numerous; and some of them of rare species. The most beautiful is a *Pinna*, the colours of which are superb; but this shell is very brittle. The inhabitants avail not themselves of this plenty of marine productions, which might afford them excellent food. Musfulmans in general eat very little fish, and appear to have a particular aversion for crabs and shell-fish. On the contrary, the oriental Christians, who are confined to long and rigid fasts, make up to themselves for their abstinence from flesh, by the frequent use of such meats as these. At Suez, the Copts live almost entirely on shell-fish.

I have already had occasion to speak, in the course of my travels, of the astonishing mass of works formed by marine insects; namely, the immense banks of coral bordering, and almost filling up the Arabic gulph. Great part of the houses in the Tehama are of coral rock. Mr Forikal used to look upon every Arabic house as a cabinet of natural history, as rich in corals as any such cabinet in Europe. The reader may  
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therefore conceive with himself what a variety of madrepores and millepores are to be met with in these seas. Some are so curious as to tempt us constantly to take specimens of them ; but then their bulk renders it impossible to carry these away. These coral rocks, rising sometimes ten fathoms above the surface of the sea, are soft under the waters : And hence, being easily wrought, they are preferred to all other stones for the purposes of building.

## CHAP. VII.

### *The Common and Rare Plants.*

ARABIA, by its situation, as has been already remarked, partakes of the advantages equally of hot and of temperate climates. In the higher parts of this country, therefore, are found plants common to it with the northern parts of Europe and Asia. The plains, on the contrary, produce vegetables which are to be met with in India and in Africa. It is, however, probable that many of these last plants had been introduced into Arabia by the Banians from their ancient country.

It is worthy of remark, that, where there are in Europe various species of any genus of plants,  
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the species of the same genus to be found in Arabia are almost all new, and have accordingly been described by Mr Forskal for the first time. The case is not the same in respect to the plants common to Arabia with India; most of these are equally to be found in both countries. The indigenous plants of Arabia have been hitherto so little known, that Mr Forskal was obliged to form no fewer than 30 new genera; not to speak of the doubtful species, which he durst hardly arrange under known genera.

Of the 800 plants described by my late friend, I shall content myself with speaking of a small number remarkable for their novelty or utility. The first place is, no doubt, due to those which are used for food. I have already had occasion to name some of them in my account of the Arabian agriculture. The Arabians cultivate wheat, barley, and durra, (*Holcus Linn.*). The latter grain, *sorgo*, or great millet, seems to be a native of Arabia, for several wild species of it are here to be found, on which the birds feed. That which is cultivated, in order to attain full maturity, requires considerable warmth, and upon a good soil grows to a great height.

The Arabians cultivate several pot-herbs, of the same nature as ours; such as lettuces, of which there is also a wild sort which is not used; spinnach; the carrot (*Daucus, Linn.*);

a very delicate sort of purilain with sharp leaves; a sort of raddish, of which only the leaves are eaten; water-creffes; and above all, great variety of gourds, cucumbers, pumpkins, and melons. Of pumpkins and melons, several sorts grow naturally in the woods, and serve for feeding camels. But the proper melons are planted in the fields, where a great variety of them is to be found, and in such abundance, that the Arabians of all ranks use them, for some part of the year, as their principal article of food. They afford a very agreeable liquor. When the fruit is nearly ripe, a hole is pierced into the pulp; this hole is then stopped with wax, and the melon left upon the stalk; within a few days the pulp is, in consequence of this process, converted into a delicious liquor.

The pot-herbs which are natives of India, but are now cultivated or naturalized in Arabia, are, —*Sida*, resembling our mallows; *Hibiscus*, resembling mallows also, but of which only one species is proper to be eaten, *Jussiaea*, nearly like the *Lyfimachia*; *Acanthus*, a beautiful species; and *Bunias*, somewhat like our cabbages; the leaves of these plants are boiled. There are other Indian plants whose leaves the Arabians eat raw, and by way of sallad, such as *Cleome*, not unlike mustard; *Stapelia*; and *Dolichos*,

a sort of bean, of which I shall hereafter have occasion to speak.

There are also some leguminous vegetables peculiar to the country, which require no culture. Such are *Corchorus*, and the plant like our mallows; *Salanthus*, a new plant like the *Salix Calaf*, the leaves of which, when boiled, have a pleasing acid taste; lastly, the celebrated *Colocasia*, (*Arcem Colocasia Linn.*), of which the Egyptians have always made great use, and which grows in abundance in all marshy places in Arabia.

Nor is there in Arabia any want of vegetables distinguished by the beauty of their flowers, and their fragrant smell. The odoriferous herbs, of which we have also species, are lavender, nardorum, the lily, and some pinks. But, the most fragrant, and those which produce the finest flowers, are plants common to Arabia and India. Those valued for their perfume are *Ocymum*, the most beautiful species of the basilic; *Inula*, a very odoriferous sort of elicampane, a native of India; *Cacalia*, from the heart of Africa; and *Dianthera*, a plant as yet but little known, of which Mr Forskal discovered eight species. In the sandy deserts grows a plant of a new genus, named *Moscharia*, by my friend, on account of its musky smell. The plants of Indian origin which afford the finest flowers, are, *Ipomæa*, a  
plant

plant like the rope weed ; *Pancraticum*, called by us the sea-daffodil, a flower of the purest white colour ; and *Hibiscus*, a species different from the leguminous *Hibiscus*, a flower of the brightest red-colour, and singularly large. These flowers, agreeable by their form or perfume, are far from being indifferent objects to the Arabian peasantry, who retain the ancient custom of crowning themselves with flowers on days of joy and festivity.

Various Arabian plants are used as materials for the arts, and for purposes of economy. An ill looking herb, like orache, and which Mr Forskal ranked as a distinct genus, by the name of *Suæda*, affords abundance of an alkaline salt, excellent for whitening linen, and used by the common people, instead of soap, which is very dear in Arabia. Of a particular sort of rush, the Arabians work carpets so fine, that the exportation of them to other countries, and even as far as to Constantinople, forms a considerable branch of trade to the people who live on the borders of the Red Sea. Two plants, natives of India, and of the interior parts of Africa, which have become very common in Arabia, namely, *Dolichos* and *Glycyne*, and resembling French beans, produce such beautiful beans, that they are strung into necklaces and bracelets, which are highly esteemed. The bean of the *Glycyne* is generally known

known by the name of the black bean of Abyſſinia. The indigo-ſhrub (*Indigofera Linn.*) is cultivated through all Arabia, blue being the favourite colour of the Arabians. Several wild ſpecies of this plant grow very generally over the country. We were told, that, in a ſcarcity of this plant, the Arabians knew how to extract indigo from a ſpecies of *Polygala*. The common *Kali* (*Salsola Linn.*) grows in great plenty along the Arabic Gulph, and in the iſles. Were the Arabians capable of induſtry, they might make ſugar for themſelves, as the cane grows in their country in its full perfection; they content themſelves with eating it raw, without even ſqueezing out the juice.

Through almoſt all Arabia, a ſort of *Panis* (*Panicum Linn.*) or bulruſh (*Scirpus Linn.*) is uſed for covering the roofs of the houſes. Theſe ſlender coverings are ſufficient in countries where rains are unfrequent.

One plant, although not a native of Arabia, merits notice in this place, on account of the diſcovery made by Mr Forſkal of an economical ſecret among the Arabians in Egypt, in which it is concerned. That country, in which the water is generally bad, has, from time immemorial, uſed for drinking a ſort of beer different in its nature from that uſed in the north. They told us that they could neither brew this beer, nor give it

it an agreeable taste, without the use of a grey herb, called *Schæbe*, an infusion of which was mixed with a certain quantity of meal, in order to form leaven for the fermentation both of bread and of beer. Upon seeing a specimen of that herb, my friend and I perceived it to be the *Lichen* of the plum-tree, a native of the isles of the Archipelago, whence several ship-ladings of it are annually brought to Alexandria.

Meadows are rare, and not rich in hot countries; in Arabia, therefore, there are are not many plants for forage. Horned cattle are not common here, and are ill-fed, and their flesh is consequently ill-tasted. Animals of a nature suitable to the climate, such as camels and asses, are, as I have already mentioned, content with the driest and hardest fare. We have seen camels eat of a species of *Euphorbia*, after it had received some little preparation in a hole dug in the earth. This animal also browses on the dry and prickly herbs and shrubs of the desert, such as the *Zygophyllum*, *Hedysarum*, *Colutea*, &c. The *Mesembryanthema*, succulent herbs, afford another resource to the animals of the sandy plains. The Bedouins likewise prepare, of the grain of a species of *Mesembryanthemum*, a sort of bread, which they eat as readily as wheat bread. The ass eats even a species of *Scorfonera*, so rough and bitter that even the camel refuses it.



All simple nations use for remedies vegetables of the virtues of which they have a traditionary knowledge. The Arabians have also medicines of this kind, which they have used from time immemorial, with a degree of success of which indeed a stranger can never be absolutely certain. I need say nothing of plants so well known as aloes and euphorbia. In Arabia, the different species of the latter of these plants are so numerous, that Arabia may certainly be regarded as its native country. In hot countries counterpoisons are highly esteemed, on account of the numbers of venomous beasts with which such countries are infested. By long experience, the inhabitants of those countries have learned what plants are salutary to man, and noxious to the venomous animals. The Arabians, however, appear to be ignorant of the virtues of the *Ophiorrhiza*, which is very common on their hills. But they value highly the *Aristolochia semper virens*, which they consider not only as a remedy, but as a preservative too, against the bite of serpents. In their opinion, a man who, for forty days, drinks the decoction of this herb, is in no future danger of being bitten by those venomous animals. Although the grounds of this opinion do not fully appear, yet it seems probable, that the jugglers, who expose themselves so daringly to be bitten by serpents, have

have some secret by which they preserve themselves from suffering by their bites. The prickly caper-tree is also esteemed an excellent antidote against poisons of all kinds.

Among the new genera of plants discovered by Mr Forſkal, ſeveral are particularly curious. *Caydabeja*, called by Sir Charles Linnaeus *Forskalea*, in honour of my deceased friend, grows in the driest places of the country. It has small feelers, with which it fixes itself so tenaciously upon stuffs and other smooth bodies, that it is torn in pieces before it can be removed. The *Volutella* is a very extraordinary plant; being properly a long slender thread, without root or leaves, which intertwines itself about trees. It bears, however, a sort of flower, and berries, which are eaten by children. The *Polycophalos*, which resembles the thistle, has at a distance the appearance of a loose heap of balls, each of which incloses a parcel of flowers. The *Nerium obesum*, a sort of laurel-rose, is remarkable for a singular bulb, close to the earth, and of the size of a man's head, which forms all its trunk, and out of which the branches spring.

Reeds are so common about the Arabic Gulph, as to have procured the Gulph the name of *Jam Suf*, or the sea of reeds, from the ancients. One species of this vegetable is particularly worthy of notice. It grows with a vigorous vegetation, and

and in great abundance, in the bath-waters, in the district of *Ghobeybe*, where it rises to the height of twenty-four feet. These long solid reeds are an article of commerce. They are exported to Yemen, and there used in the ceilings of houses. In the same district of *Ghobeybe*, nearly opposite to Suez, we were surprised to see a *Conserua* growing in the bottom of the hot baths of *Hammam Faraon*, the heat of which was at 49 degrees in Reaumur's thermometer.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of Trees and Shrubs.*

THE sandy plains of Arabia are almost destitute of trees; only a few palms are scattered here and there. Forests are to be seen only in the Highland provinces, where the hills retain enough of earth for vegetation; but even in the Highlands are rare. The trees in those forests are either absolutely unknown, or at least different from our European trees of the same genera or species. The principal of them are the following, of which I shall have occasion to speak somewhat more at length: *Sceura*, *Tomex*, *Gatha*, *Cynanchum*, *Mæru*, *Bæka*, *Haledi*, and several

several species of the fig-tree unknown among us.

The Arabians cultivate several of our fruit trees. They have pomegranate, almond, apricot, pear, and apple-trees. Here is a species of pear-tree, and a corneil-tree which are peculiar to Arabia. The Arabians likewise eat the fruit of several of our shrubs, such as the *Ajclepias* and the *Rhamnus*.

Although the Mahometans drink no wine, the Arabians however plant the vine, and have a great variety of grapes. They dry a small sort of grape, called *Kischmisch*, which has no stone, but only soft, and almost impalpable seeds; and of these grapes they sell a quantity to their neighbours. They also make from mint a syrup, named *Dub*, which they find a pretty lucrative article of commerce.

Several sorts of lemons and oranges are found in Arabia. If an inference may be drawn from the names which the Arabians have given them, one should suppose that they have had an orange tree from Portugal, and two lemon-trees from Italy. From common oranges, cut through the middle while they are green, dried in the air, and steeped for forty days in oil, is prepared an essence famous among old women for restoring a fresh black colour to grey hairs.

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The Banians have transported various fruit-trees from India, which are now naturalized in Arabia; such are the Bannana-tree (*Musa Linn.*); the Mangoustan, (*Mangifera Linn.*); the *Papaya* (*Carica Papaya Linn.*); and the *Cissus Linn.* Arabia produces the date-tree; but their other palms, and especially the *Cocos*, seem to be from India.

The Indian fig-tree, (*Ficus varta*), although now very common in Arabia, is perhaps not a native of this country. The singular property which this tree possesses, of spreading itself, by means of filaments shooting from its branches, which, when they reach the ground, take root and form new trunks, is well known. Mr Forskal saw a dozen species of indigenous fig-trees in Arabia, which are not mentioned by Linnæus. Their fruit is far from delicate; seldom eatable. The bark of one species is used in tanning leather. Of another the leaves are so rough, that they are used for cleaning and polishing iron. The rest are only so many of the useless trees of the forest.

The tamarind, which, in Arabia, as well as in India, is equally useful and agreeable. It has a pulp of a vineous taste, of which a wholesome refreshing liquor is prepared. Its shade shelters houses from the torrid heat of the sun, and its fine figure greatly adorns the scenery of the country.

country. The inhabitants are also fond of raising over their houses the shade of the Indian fig-tree.

Arabia appears to be very rich in indigenous trees, the number of which is more than proportionate to its peculiar herbaceous plants. But great trees are not easily removed from one place to another; and those of the forests, in the back parts of the country, are seldom seen by travellers than the other vegetables. Hence, it is no wonder that we have been hitherto so ignorant concerning the trees of Arabia. More than half the new genera classed by Mr Forskal comprehend trees only. My friend saw likewise other eighteen trees, the genera of which he had no opportunity of ascertaining; not to mention a great many others, of which he could learn only the Arabic name.

*Catha* is one of those new genera peculiar to Arabia. This tree, which is improveable by culture, is commonly planted among the coffee-shrubs on the hills where these grow. The Arabians are accustomed constantly to chew the buds of this tree, which they call *Kaad*, they are as much addicted to this practice, as the Indians to that of chewing betel. To their kaad they ascribe the virtues of assisting digestion, and of fortifying the constitution against infectious distempers. Yet its insipid taste gives no indication

indication of extraordinary virtues. The only effects we felt from the use of those buds were the hinderance and the interruption of our sleep.

*Elcaya* and *Keura*, two trees famous for their perfume, are not known, but form two new genera. The former is common on the hills of Yemen; and the women steep its fruit in water, which they use for washing and perfuming the head. The second bears some resemblance to the palm-tree, and produces flowers of a rich and delicious smell. These flowers are sold at an high price, as the *Keura* is rather a scarce plant. But one little knot, if preserved in a cool place, will long continue to diffuse its odours through a whole apartment.

Children eat the fruit, which is insipid enough, of a large tree called *Oncoba*, and a tall shrub named *Mærua*. Both these, too, are new species discovered by Mr Forskal. Such is also the *Chadara*, a large tree, and the *Antura*, a tree of a smaller size; neither of which has any thing remarkable to distinguish it, except its wood and its novelty. *Culhamia*, a large tree, also unknown to the botanists, has nothing but its use to recommend it. *Cadaba* and *Mæsu* are shrubs which have nothing particular about them, and might be passed over in silence, had not Mr Forskal taken notice of them.

Several

Several shrubs which are indigenous in Arabia are of some use to the inhabitants. The fruit of a new genus, named *Sodada*, is eaten; from the berry of another new shrub, called *Cebatha*, is extracted a very strong species of brandy, the acid taste of which is improved by a mixture of sugar. A sort of that false phaseolus, *Dolichos*, which I have mentioned in speaking of the plants, grows up to a bushy shrub, so as to form hedges in a short time, which are almost impenetrable. *Cynanchum*, a new genus, is a shrub, of which the wood called by the Arabians *March*, is used for fuel, as it has all the lightness and combustibility of tinder.

An Arabian tree, famous from the most remote antiquity, and nevertheless but little known, is that from which the balsam of Mecca is obtained. We found one of these trees in the open fields; and under its shade Mr Forskal wrote the first botanical description of the species. He at the same named it, as a new species, *Amyris*; a name which has since been adopted by other botanists. The tree has not a beautiful appearance; and, what is surprising, its qualities are not known to the inhabitants of Yemen, in which we met with it. They only burn its wood as a perfume. The wood of a sort of *Amyris*, called *Kafal*, is exported to



Egypt, and there used to communicate an agreeable odour to pots boiled upon it, as fuel, which affects also the liquors contained in them. The Arabians, in the remoter parts of the province of *Hedjas*, seem to be better informed; for they collect the balsam, and bring it to Mecca, whence it is distributed through the Turkish empire, where it is in high estimation. Even at Mecca it is difficult to obtain any of this balsam in its original purity. America produces also some trees of the genus of *Amyris*, so that the value of the balsam of Mecca may fall in time.

We could learn nothing of the tree from which incense distils; and Mr Forskal does not mention it. I know that it is to be found in a part of Hadramaut, where it is called *Oliban*. But the Arabians hold their own incense in no estimation, and make use only of that which comes from India. Probably Arabian incense was so called among the ancients, because the Arabians traded in it, and conveyed it from India to the ports of Egypt and Syria.

Senna (*Cassia Senna* Linn.) is a shrub of which the favourite seat seems to be Upper Egypt, and that part of Arabia which lies opposite to Upper Egypt, on the other side of the Arabic Gulph. As there are several species of *Cassia*, it seems probable that the senna imported into Europe is not all the produce of the  
same

same shrub. The differently figured leaves indicate as much. That which we call fenna of Alexandria grows in great abundance in the territory of *Abu Arifch*. The Arabians sell it at Mecca and Jidda; whence it passes, by the way of Suez and Kahira, to Alexandria. Senna, and other sorts of cassia, are much used in Arabia in various diseases. *Cassia Fistula*, or black cassia, mixed with a little rhubarb, is the best remedy known to the Arabian physicians for the cure of the *Cholera Morbus*, and of diarrhœas, which are in hot countries peculiarly dangerous.

I have already had occasion to speak of the coffee-tree, which furnishes the Arabians with their best article for exportation. This shrub, which is at present reared in many green-houses in Europe, is too well known to need a description here. The Arabians say that it is a native of Abyssinia; and several travellers affirm that they have seen it in great plenty in that country, where it produces berries not inferior in goodness to the coffee of Yemen. What renders this relation the more probable is, that the fruit of the wild coffee-tree is in Arabia so bad as to be unfit for use. However this may be, it is at least certain that this shrub thrives only on hills, and in places which are cool, and not destitute of moisture. For this reason, the inhabitants of the Highlands plant other trees among  
their

their coffee-plants, in order to shade them; and, in the time of the intense heats, water them. It should seem then that the Europeans are mistaken, in supposing that this shrub should be planted in a dry soil, under a torrid sky, and in the hottest climates. This mistake may be suspected to be the reason of the bad quality of the American coffee. In the account of my journey through Yemen, I have mentioned the countries where the best coffee is to be found; and have at the same time spoken of the extensive trade which the Arabians carry on in this commodity.

Their profits are less considerable from the cotton-tree, of which they have two species; that which grows to a shrub; and another which bears red flowers. Almost all the inhabitants of Arabia are clothed in cotton-cloth from India.

Arabia, as well as Egypt, produces the celebrated *Albenna* (*Lawsonia inermis* Linn.) the leaves of which, pulverised and wrought into a paste, form a cosmetic which is in high repute through the east. The women of those countries, with this drug, stain their hands and feet, or at least the nails of these, of a red colour; which is yellowish, or deeper, according to the manner in which the powder is applied. They think their charms improved by this painting; and, indeed, it may, by contrast, render the black and yellow of their complexion less disagreeable than they would

would otherwise be. This shrub, in its size and character, has a resemblance to our privets.

The sensitive plant, of the genus *Mimosa*, is well known. In Arabia are several species of this genus, all either trees or shrubs, which serve the inhabitants both for use and pleasure. One of these trees droops its branches whenever any person approaches it, seeming as if it saluted those who retire under its shade. This mute hospitality has so endeared this tree to the Arabians, that the injuring or cutting of it down is strictly prohibited. Another of these (*Mimosa Selam*) produces splendid flowers, of a beautiful red colour, with which the Arabians crown their heads on their days of festivity. The flowers of another (*Mimosa Lebbeck*) are no less remarkable for a fine silky tuft, formed by their pistils. The leaves of another (*Mimosa Orfæa*) preserve camel's milk from becoming sour, so that it retains all its sweetness for several days. The smoke of the timber of this same tree expels a worm, which fixes itself in the flesh of the human neck, and produces epileptic fits. This species of the mimosa is dispersed through Asia, Africa, and America; it is well known that the sensitive plant was brought into Europe from the latter of these continents.

At Beit el Fakih, Mr Forskal found some fine pines, which were the ornament of the place;  
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but he could not learn either their name or their country. He suspects them to have been brought from India by the Bramins. But, as their characteristics were different from those of any other known species, he has classed them in two new genera, under the names of *Hyperanthera* and *Bineclarium*. Those trees were large, of a majestic form, and covered with beautiful flowers. The *Cissus*, perhaps another native of India, is at present common in Arabia, where it has been naturalized, as well as the *Tomex*, a great tree, the properties of which we are unacquainted with. The *Cissus* is valued as one of the best counterpoisons; and is on this account held in high estimation; it is the *Cissus Illa Linn.* A species of *Glycyrrhiza*, or liquorice-shrub, is common in Arabia and India.

Arabia does not produce many poisonous vegetables; yet here is found a very dangerous shrub of a new genus, called by Mr Forskal *Adenia*. The buds of this shrub are one of the most violent poisons, if dried, and given in drink as a powder; they have the sudden effect to swell the body in an extraordinary manner. A sort of caper-tree (*Capparis spinosa Linn.*) is the only remedy against the effects of this poison. This latter shrub is so common in Arabia, that the antidote is always to be found beside the poison.

Mr Forskal likewise enumerates other eighteen trees which he saw, and which are indigenous in Arabia ; but their genera he could not determine. Of the most part he learned the Arabic names, and of a few, some of the properties. In Yemen he saw two trees, one of which was like the lemon, the other like the apple-tree ; but the inhabitants themselves know neither their names nor qualities. *Noemam*, a tree from the coffee mountains, is often confounded with the cassia-tree. *Bæka* and *Anas* are trees very common in the Highlands, the juice of which is caustic and poisonous. *Schamama* bears a fruit which tastes and smells like a lemon. *Gharib Elbæke* is a tree on the hills in the territory of *Abu Arisch*, from which distils an agreeable juice, which affords pleasant morsels to the birds. *Segleg*, another tree of Abu Arisch, bears leaves from which there is a juice expressed which passes for an excellent remedy in cases of weakness of sight. *Sym el Horat*, or the poison of fishes, is the fruit of an unknown tree in Arabia Felix ; from which great quantities of it are exported by the ports of the Red Sea. It is used in fishing. Fishes are fond of it, and swallow it eagerly ; after which they float in a state of seeming intoxication on the surface of the water. This seems to be a sort of *nux vomica* ;  
which

which is also obtained from the western coast of India.

We neglected to inform ourselves, in Arabia, concerning the production of manna; and what we learned from a monk, in a convent near Suez, was a monastic legend, not worth repetition. The tree from which manna is obtained in Mesopotamia, by the shaking of its branches, is an oak, as I have been credibly informed by several different persons. This manna is white and saccharine. But, at Basra, I had a specimen shewn me of the manna *Tarand-jubin*, which is gathered in Persia from a prickly shrub; it, as well as the former, is in round grains; but these are yellowish. As Arabia-Petræa abounds in prickly shrubs, possibly this manna may be found also there; although in those desert places it cannot be very plentiful. Both these sorts of manna are used as sugar, in several dishes of meat, especially pastry. They are nourishing, and, when newly gathered, have no purgative qualities.

The cedar grows not in Arabia, but seems to be a tree peculiar to Mount Libanus. The Arabians have little wood fit for building; their trees are mostly of a light, porous texture. *Sceura*, a new genus described by Mr Forkal, a tree that grows on the sea-shore, is so soft a wood, that no use can be made of it.

## CHAP. IX.

*The Minerals of Arabia.*

IN the account of my journey, and in speaking of the soil of Arabia, I have already had some occasion to mention the nature of those stones of which the hills are here composed. I have likewise spoken of the masses of basaltes between *Hadie* and *Kachma*, from the upper parts of which pentagonal fragments are from time to time detached, and darted down into the vallies.

Beside calcareous, vitrifiable, and sand-stones, we saw also a ferruginous spar, mixed with brown or white selenite, almost transparent. We found likewise, in the neighbourhood of *Loheya*, a blueish gypsum, a grey schistus, and spheric marcaffites, in beds of grit-stone; from which stones are hewn for building. Arabia affords, however, stones of greater value. The onyx is common in Yemen; and we saw even quantities of these stones on the road between *Taes* and *Mount Sumara*. In a hill near the town of *Damar* is found the Stone *Ayck Jemani*, which is in the highest estimation among the Arabians. It is of a dark red, or rather a light-brown colour, and seems to be a



fort of carnelian. The Arabians set it in rings or bracelets, and ascribe to it the virtue of stopping the bleeding of wounds when instantly applied. Among the *stones of Mokha*, which are, properly speaking, Indian carnelians, brought from Surat to Arabia and Europe, pieces are often found which bear a perfect resemblance to this *Ayek Jemani*.

I could learn nothing of the precious stones, properly so called, which are supposed to be found in Arabia. It does not seem even probable that emeralds were ever found here. The hill which has been denominated the hill of emeralds is in Egypt, on the opposite side of the Arabic Gulph, and forms a part of that large chain of mountains which are composed chiefly of granite.

We saw two little hills, consisting almost entirely of fossil salt; one near *Lobeya*, and the other in the neighbourhood of Hodeida. Those masses of salt are piled up in large transparent strata, and inclosed in a crust of calcareous stone. The Arabians formerly dug up this salt, but the galleries of the mines have sunk down, and it is now neglected. We were told, however, that foreign vessels sometimes come to laden with this salt, from the hill near the isle of *Kameran*, in the neighbourhood of Hodeida.

Arabia

Arabia does not appear to be rich in metals. The old Greek and Latin writers go even so far as to assert that it is absolutely destitute of iron. This is not true; for grains of iron are to be seen among the sands which are washed down by the rains. Magnets are commonly to be met with in the province of *Kufma*; and at *Saade* are iron-mines, which are wrought at present. It must, however, be confessed that the iron of Yemen is coarse and brittle; disadvantages in it which cannot be remedied. Besides, the scarcity of wood makes this iron dearer than that which is brought from distant countries. For this reason, iron is a commodity which strangers can always dispose of to advantage in the ports of the Red Sea.

In Oman are many very rich lead mines. As this metal is more easily fusible, the inhabitants of this province export great plenty of it. This trade is carried on from the harbour of *Masfat*.

As the ancients honoured one part of Arabia with the title of Happy, it should seem that they must have ascribed to it all possible advantages. The Greeks and Latins accordingly make ample mention of the immense quantity of gold which this country produced. In remote times possibly, when the Arabians were the factors of the trade to India, much of this precious metal might pass through Arabia into Europe; but that

## SECTION XXX.

## VOYAGE FROM MOKHA TO BOMBAY.

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CHAP. I.*Departure from Mokha.*

THE vessel belonging to Mr Scott, with whom we were to take our passage for Bombay, having been detained for a considerable time at Mokha, we could not leave the city till 23d of August 1763. Although Messrs Cramer and Baurenfeind were at that time very ill, they, however, determined not to lose the opportunity of leaving Arabia. As to myself, my health was so far re-established, that I could safely venture upon the voyage to India.

The famous streight of Babel-Mandel, where the Arabian Gulph joins the ocean, and where we arrived on the second day of our voyage, may be about ten German miles in breadth. It

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is interspersed with small isles, of which that nearest Africa is called *Perim*, and forms with the African continent a channel, through which ships usually pass, notwithstanding the rapid current which prevails in it. In the sea, between Arabia and India, there is generally a rapid current driving to the east, with so much violence, that it is impossible to reckon the rate at which a ship runs in passing here. In this sea we met likewise with north winds so cold that we were obliged to put on warmer clothes.

In this first part of our voyage, Mr Cramer's health seemed to recover daily; but Mr Baurenfeind grew worse and worse. He sunk into a deep lethargy, and died on the 29th of August. The designs of this artist, of which I have published a part, sufficiently bespeak his praise.

Next day after Mr Baurenfeind, died also our servant, *Berggreen*, a Swede, who had made several campaigns in the service of a Colonel of Hussars. This man, who was naturally robust, and had been inured to fatigue, had at first laughed at the idea of the hardships of a voyage to Arabia; but he sunk under them at last, as well as Mr Cramer, as I shall hereafter relate.

This melancholy fate of my fellow-travellers leads me to recollect the similar end of two learned travellers into the east, which deserves

to be made known. The one was Mr Donati, who was at the head of a society of learned Italians, sent by the King of Sardinia to travel in Asia. Soon after their arrival in Egypt, this society quarrelled among themselves. Mr Donati's companions returned to Italy, and he proceeded alone on the journey, attended only by a young interpreter from Kahira, and an Italian servant. He went by Damascus to Basra, in order to find an opportunity of passing on to India. But, being naturally impatient, and weary of waiting for an European vessel, he embarked on board a small open skiff, in which he purposed to proceed to Mangalore, on the coast of Malabar. The fatigue was too much for him; and he died on board this vessel, three days before it reached India. Before his death, he gave money to his servants to carry them home; but this the Italian losing all at play, in despair, turned Mussulman at Maskat.

Mr Donati was well qualified to make the most of such a journey as that he had undertaken. His knowledge was very extensive; and he possessed all the requisite firmness and activity of spirit. He was farther possessed of a still more necessary quality, courage, which danger could not subdue, and of which he gave frequent proofs in Egypt, when attacked by the  
Arabians,

Arabians, who, at last, learned to respect his intrepidity.

This philosopher had taken, although in vain, all possible precautions to make his papers and the curiosities which he had collected in Egypt and Syria reach the Sardinian Court. He had intrusted to the Arabs with whom he failed all his effects, begging them, before his death, to convey the whole to the viceroy of Goa, who would not fail to forward them to the Court of Turin. I met with one of those men in India, who told me that they had faithfully discharged their commission, and that the whole of Mr Donati's effects were in the hands of the Portuguese viceroy. In 1772, however, nothing had been obtained from him; and I know not if any part of the deceased traveller's effects has been yet received in Italy. It was in 1763 that the Arabs, on board whose vessel Mr Donati died, were on the coast of Malabar.

The other learned traveller to whom I above alluded, was a French physician named *Simon*, well skilled in natural history, and a considerable proficient in astronomy. He arrived long before us in Syria, and was well received by his countrymen at Aleppo. Not finding leisure enough while he was among those Europeans, to prosecute his researches, he went to Diarbekir, in the hope of being there left at liberty for

his inquiries. In that city he lodged with the capuchins, the only Europeans in the place; but, disgusted by the mummeries and ridiculous observances of those monks, he, in a fit of despair, resolved to become Mussulman.

Although the Turks make much of an European physician, Mr Simon saw himself neglected as soon as he had made profession of Mahometism; just as if he had lost his skill in his profession, with the change of his religion. Becoming weary of Diarbekir, he retired to Bagdad, and there lived by the sale of drugs, and the practice of medicine. Still retaining, however, his taste for natural history, he continued to botanize in the adjacent country with great activity. A Persian khan in the neighbourhood, whom he had refused to visit, had him carried off, when he was out upon one of his botanical excursions, and compelled him by the bastinado to prescribe for him. Mr Simon not succeeding in the cure of the khan, was again bastinadoed, and imprisoned. The successor of the deceased khan being likewise sick, and learning that the prisoner was an European physician, took him out from confinement, entrusted his health to his care, and was fortunately cured by Mr Simon's skill. But this success proved only a source of new misfortunes to the ill-fated philosopher. His new master refused him permission  
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to return to Bagdad, and carried him with him, in all his campaigns, in the late civil war in Persia. In one of those expeditions, an enemy surprised the khan, and Mr Simon was slain on that occasion, with his master, and their whole party.

The passage between Arabia and India was formerly thought very dangerous. Ships were carried on by so rapid a current, that they could neither keep their reckoning, nor distinguish the coast during the rainy season : Several were consequently lost on the low coasts of Malabar. These misfortunes have ceased to take place, since an observation was made, which has been thought new, although Arrian speaks of it as being known to the ancients, in the Indian ocean, at a certain distance from land, a great many water serpents, from 12 to 13 inches in length, are to be seen rising above the surface of the water. When these serpents are seen, they are an indication that the coast is exactly two degrees distant.

We saw some of these serpents, for the first time, on the evening of the 9th of September ; on the 11th we landed in the harbour of Bombay ; and on the 13th entered the city.



## CHAP. II.

*Of the Isle and the City of Bombay.*

THE isle of Bombay is two German miles in length, by rather more than half a mile in breadth. A narrow channel divides it from another small isle of little value, called by the English *Old Woman's Island*. Bombay produces nothing but cocoa's and rice; and on the shore a considerable quantity of salt is collected. The inhabitants are obliged to bring their provisions from the continent, or from *Salfet*, a large and fertile island not far from Bombay, and belonging to the Marattas. Since I left India, the English have made an attempt upon Salfet, which is indeed very much in their power, and the public papers say that they have been successful. I know not whether they may be able to maintain themselves in it against the Marattas, whose armies are very numerous.

The sea-breezes, and the frequent rains, cool the atmosphere, and render the climate of this island temperate. Its air was formerly unhealthy and dangerous, but has become pure since the English drained the marshes, in the city and its environs. Still, however, many Europeans die suddenly

suddenly here ; but they are new-comers, who shorten their days by a mode of life unfuitable to the climate ; eating great quantities of beef and pork, which the Indian Legislator had wisely forbidden, and drinking copiously of the strong wines of Portugal in the hottest season. They likewise persist obstinately in wearing the European dress, which by its ligatures impedes the free circulation of the blood, and by confining the limbs, renders the heat more intolerable. The Orientals again live to a great age, and are little subject to diseases, because they keep the body at ease in wide flowing robes, abstain from animal food and strong liquors, and eat their principal meal in the evening after sunset.

The city of Bombay, situate in the northern part of the island, is a quarter of a German mile in length ; but narrow. It is defended by an indifferent citadel towards the sea, and at the middle of the city. On the land side, its fortifications are very good. During the war the East India Company expended no less than 900,000 French livres a-year, in the construction of new works for its defence ; and, although these works are no longer carried on with the same activity, yet the fortifications of Bombay are still continued, so that it must be in a short time the most considerable fortress in India. Beside the town, there

there are in the island some small forts sufficient to protect it from any irruption of the Indians.

In this city are several handsome buildings; among which are the Director's palace, and a large and elegant church near it. The houses are not flat roofed here, as through the rest of the east, but are covered with tiles in the European fashion. The English have glass windows. The other inhabitants of the island have their windows of small pieces of transparent shells framed in wood, which renders the apartments very dark. In the east it is the fashion to live during the dry season in chambers open on one side. The houses of Bombay are in general neither splendid nor commodious in any great degree.

The harbour is spacious, and sheltered from all winds. A valuable work, which has been constructed at the Company's expence, is, two basons, hewn out in the rock, in which two ships may be at once careened. A third is now preparing. This work, which has been very expensive, likewise brings in a considerable annual return. Strangers pay very dear for liberty to careen in these basons. While I was there I saw a ship of war belonging to the Imam of Sana, which he had sent to Bombay solely on purpose that it might be refitted.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Inhabitants of Bombay.*

THE toleration which the English grant to all religions has rendered this island very populous. During these hundred years, for which it has been in the possession of the Company, the number of its inhabitants has greatly increased; so that they are now reckoned at 140,000 souls, although within these twenty years they did not amount to 70,000.

Of these the Europeans are naturally the least numerous class; and this the rather as they do not marry, and their numbers consequently do not multiply. The other inhabitants are Portuguese, or Indian Catholics; *Hindoos*, the original possessors of the country; *Persians* from *Kerman*; Mahometans of different sects; and in the last place some Oriental Christians. My journey to Surat will afford me occasion to speak more at length of the *Hindoos* and *Persians*, who chiefly inhabit the environs of this city; adding the observations I also made on these people at Surat.

The English, as I have mentioned, have an handsome church at Bombay, but only one English

glish clergyman to perform the services of religion in it; and, if he should die, the congregation would be absolutely deprived of a pastor; for the Company have no chaplains in their ships, and entertain no clergy in their settlements on the coast. Wherefore, when a child is to be baptized, which is not often, as the English rarely marry in India, a Danish missionary is sent for, to administer the sacrament of baptism.

The Catholics, a scanty remainder of the Portuguese, and a great number of Indians, their converts, are much more numerous than the Protestants. They have abundance of priests, as well Europeans as Indians, who attend their studies at Goa. To superintend this herd, the Pope named some years ago a bishop of Bombay, but the governor of the island sent him away, declaring that they needed not Catholic priests of so high a rank. The Catholic churches are decent buildings, and are sumptuously ornamented within. The Jews had once a college and a church in the middle of this island. Their college is at present the country-house of the English governour. And the old church has been converted into a suite of assembly-rooms.

All religions, as I have already remarked, are here indulged in the free exercise of their public worship, not only in their churches, but openly,  
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in festivals and processions, and none takes offence at another. Yet Government allows not the Catholic priests to give a loose to their zeal for making profelytes. When any person chooses to become Catholic, the reasons must be laid before Government, and if they are judged valid, he is then allowed to profess his conversion. The priests complain of the difficulty of obtaining this permission. They, however, have considerable success in conversion among the slaves, who, being struck with the pomp of the Romish worship, and proud of wearing the image of a saint upon their breasts, choose rather to frequent the Catholic churches than any others, and persuade their countrymen, as they successively arrive, to follow their example. I had purchased a young Catholic negro at Bombay, who was also born of Christian parents, and intended to bring him with me into Europe; but, fearing afterwards that the Mussulmans in Persia and Turkey might give me trouble, and pretend that I was carrying away a Mahometan boy in order to make him a Christian, I gave him away before my departure from India.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the Government and Power of the English on the Coast of Malabar.*

THE English East India Company govern their settlements in a mode of administration different from that of the Portuguese and Dutch. These last nations intrust the disposal of all places to the power of a single governor; the Portuguese to the viceroy of Goa; the Dutch to the governor-general of Batavia. The conquests of the English are, on the contrary, all divided into four independent governments, each of which receives its orders immediately from the Court of Directors at London. The seats of these four governments are, *Bombay* for the coast of *Malabar*, *Madras* for the *Coromandel* coast, *Calcutta* for *Bengal*, and *Bencoolen* for the island of *Sumatra*.

Although independent of one another, the several English governors are however obliged to lend one another mutual aid in extraordinary exigencies. On a late occasion, news being received at Bombay of an insurrection, the council of Bombay, without waiting for orders from the Court of Directors in London, sent troops and

and artillery to Calcutta. These different establishments are all governed in the same manner. All processes between subjects of the Company are determined by the law of England.

The council or regency of Bombay consist of a governor, with the title of president, and twelve counsellors, who are all merchants, except the commander of the troops, who held lately the rank of major. The Company have of late made some changes upon this arrangement. The president must be a military man; the commander of the troops is a brigadier, and has a voice in the council; and the director of the naval affairs has a place among the twelve counsellors who were formerly all merchants. The other servants of the Company are factors and writers of different ranks. These rise from lower to higher places in the order of seniority,—even to the very first offices, that only excepted of president; who is nominated by the Court of Directors in London. The servants of the Company are sometimes transferred from one department to another. *Mr Spencer*, a very intelligent man, who was a counsellor at Bombay when I was there, was soon after transferred to the place of first president at Calcutta.

The president of the council of Bombay is obliged to reside in the island; as are also those counsellors who hold the offices of treasurer and



inspector of the Company's stores. The other counsellors are sent out to manage the concerns of the Company's trade in the establishments dependent on the government of Bombay. In my time, the directors of the trade at *Surat*, *Tellicherry*, *Anjengo*, and *Basra*, were members of the council. In three of these places, the Company have forts in which they keep up garrisons of sufficient strength. Since I left that country, the English have conquered *Baradsch*, a great town, north from *Surat*, which was subject to a Nabob of its own, and was formerly the seat of a Dutch factory. A counsellor from Bombay now resides as director in this city.

Factors are sent to the inferior settlements; such as, in the province of *Scindi*, the great city of *Tatta*, the seat of the sovereign of the country; *Lær Bunder*; and *Schah Bunder*. The Company have likewise factors at *Abu Schæhr*, *Cambay*, *Onor*, *Calicut*, and even in the fort of *Victoria*. This fort stands on a great river, which holds its course through the interior country, even to as great distance as *Puna*, the seat of the chief of the Mahrattas. The English acquired this place, with some adjacent villages, from the Mahrattas, in exchange for *Geri*, a fortress once belonging to the famous *Angria*, of which they had taken possession. The Company expected, that, by means of this river, they might extend  
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their trade through the country of the Mahrattas. This project having, however, failed, they avail themselves of the fort, and purchase butcher-meats from the Mahometans in the neighbourhood, as the Hindoos about Bombay will not sell their cattle for slaughter.

It is for the benefit of the Company to send its servants successively to different places, before they are advanced to the first employments. Factors thus gain a knowledge of the affairs of all the different settlements subject to the government of which they are afterwards to be counsellors. The Company, however, allows but very moderate salaries to its factors and directors. But they are permitted to trade on their own account in India only from *Delegoa* near the Cape of Good Hope, to China, and northward, as far as Jidda and Basra. By means of this extensive trade chiefly, do the directors acquire that wealth which is the astonishment and envy of their countrymen in Europe.

These advantages for the acquisition of wealth in trade, are reserved for the English exclusively. The Company admit strangers into none but the military department of their service. In it they must enter the lowest rank; but advancement is pretty rapid; for their mode of life cuts off the officers very fast. At Bombay, I saw officers from various nations; chiefly however  
Germans

Germans and Swifs. The troops are well paid; but I could not think the service agreeable; for the writers, who are more directly in the career of advancement, look upon the foldier with that contempt which monied men commonly think themselves entitled to shew for persons who are in their pay.

In the government of which Bombay is the centre, the Company maintain seventeen companies of regular troops, consisting each of about an hundred and twenty men, with three companies of artillery. The foldiers are mostly Europeans, except some *Topases*, or Catholic Indians, dressed in the European fashion. At Bombay there is also a body of three thousand *Sepoys*, or Indian foldiers, Pagan and Mahometan, who wear their own original dress, and are commanded by their own officers. Each company of this corps has an inferior European officer to teach the *Sepoys* their exercise; for, when commanded by Europeans, they form good troops. At Surat, the Company have in their pay a small corps of Arabs from the Persian Gulph, who are in such high reputation in India for their courage, that every Rajah desires to have some of them in his service.

The artillery of Bombay is in very good condition, owing to the care of a Swede, whom the English sent out in 1752, and who brought  
with

with him a company of gunners whom he had raised in Germany. Bombay was thus furnished with a good number of able workmen, chiefly masons and carpenters. Those Germans likewise engaged many of their countrymen to leave the Dutch, and enter into the English service.

The whole coast from Bombay to Basra is inhabited by people addicted to piracy, such as the *Malays*, the *Sangeries*, the *Kulis*, the *Arabs*, with other petty nations. It might be easy for the English to exterminate these pirates; as they shewed in 1765, by possessing themselves of the territory of the Malayans; which however they soon after ceded to the Indians for a round sum of money. But it is the Company's interest to leave those plunderers to scour the seas, and hinder other nations from sailing in the same latitudes. The English are therefore content with protecting their own trade; for which purpose they maintain in the government of Bombay eight or ten small ships of war, with a number of armed barks. The Indians dare not travel from one port to another, otherwise than in caravans, and under the protection of an English vessel, for which they are obliged to pay very dear.

The Company find it not necessary to pay their court in a particular manner to any nation  
in

in these latitudes, except the Mahrattas, who are masters of the coast and of the isles about Bombay, and by consequence in some measure masters of the subsistence of this settlement. The marine force of the Mahrattas is not formidable ; but they can bring 80,000 cavalry into the field. This residue of the old Indians, retired among the hills, still retain power which renders them formidable to the Moguls. The great Aurengzebe, to keep peace with the Mahrattas, granted them a fourth of the customs paid by several provinces ; a revenue which they have found means to enlarge since the rise of the last troubles in Indostan. They ventured to attack the English, in a time of peace, and in 1765 took a man of war pertaining to that nation. The Company, instead of revenging this insult, thought it more prudent to settle the affair amicably. The sovereign of the Mahrattas, who is a Bramin, as are also his principal officers, resides at *Puna*, a great town in the interior country. He farms out his provinces to the Bramins, who again employ under-farmers of their own Cast. According to accounts, the government of this nation is good, although arbitrary. Justice is impartially administered ; agriculture and manufactures flourish ; and the country is very populous. The Mahrattas, although they thus practise justice among themselves, are, however, guilty

guilty of great barbarities in their frequent incursions into the neighbouring provinces under the government of Mahometans. They pillage and lay waste all before them in the most cruel manner.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Trade of Bombay.*

THE permission which the Company's servants enjoy of trading on their own account, appears to many persons to be injurious to the interests of the Company. It must be confessed that this private trade is liable to abuses, and may on certain occasions prove hurtful to that of the Company. Yet, judging upon the whole, I am induced to think it advantageous alike to the masters and to the servants. A liberty of trading on their own account inspires factors with spirit and activity, and affords them means of acquiring fuller information concerning various branches of commerce. Thus is the trade in general benefited, and business extended.

A recent instance will shew both the good and the bad side of this account. In the first part of my work, I have mentioned the privilege the English enjoy at Jidda, of paying lower duties

than any other nation. Since the extension of their conquests in India, they have engrossed almost the whole trade of the Red Sea; so that, few ships from other nations now resorting to Jidda, the customs of that city have considerably declined. The Turks and Arabs, not daring to raise those duties, in violation of the tenor of their treaties with the English, contrived to make the purchaser of goods imported by ships from Bombay pay a second duty. This falling ultimately upon the English merchant, the Company complained, but could obtain no redress. They then threatened to forsake the harbour of Jidda, and to send their ships straight to Suez. The Turks and Arabs, considering the navigation of the Arabian Gulph as the most dangerous in the world, paid no attention to those menaces.

At last, Mr Holford, an able seaman, determined to accomplish them. To this end, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the regency of Cairo, and assurance of good treatment at Suez. Ali Bey, who was then master of Egypt, giving himself no concern about the interests of the Pacha of Jidda, or of the Sheriffe of Mecca, offered the English the most advantageous conditions; hoping to derive great profits from the India trade running in this new channel. Since Mr Holford, in 1773, made a successful voyage up the Arabic Gulph, and conducted the first  
English

English ship freight to Suez, several vessels have every year sailed from India for this port. In 1776, five of those English ships entered the harbour of Suez. The passage has been found so short and convenient, that the regency of Bombay now send their couriers by the way of Suez to England. In this way, they receive answers to their dispatches within the same length of time which was formerly consumed in the conveyance of their packets to London.

But, this change in the conduct of this trade, is not yet of long standing. By the diminution of the expences of freight which it produced, the English reduced the prices of India goods so considerably, through all the Levant, that the Company no longer found sale for those stuffs which they had been accustomed to send from London to the Levant. They have, therefore, prohibited their factors from trading, on their own account, from India freight to Suez. But, as this trade has been once opened, the Company might send their own ships to Egypt. The only consideration to hinder them, is, that of the instability of the government of Cairo, and the frequent disturbances which render Egypt unsafe for the merchant.

All the English ships for India sail to one of the four principal settlements. Those which sail for Bombay are commonly five months  
in



in their passage. In one instance, the voyage is known to have been performed in three months and eighteen days. Few of those ships, of which there arrive commonly four in the year, return to Europe immediately after discharging their cargoes. They, for the most part, make first some voyage to a different settlement, as far often as China, by which they gain considerable freights, when the governor favours them so far as to grant them his permission. Each of these ships was formerly to take out 40,000 crowns; but, since the Company have acquired such an extent of territory in India, they have no necessity to send ready money from London to their settlements.

The principal article with which the ships from India are freighted, is cloth of all sorts, which is sold mostly at Basra, and in Persia. The others are cochineal, ivory, iron, copper, guns, arms, &c. The crew of these ships carry out likewise, each man a parcel of goods, on his own account. A great part of the cargoes of these ships is publicly sold, soon after they are unladen. The Indian merchants gather in to the sale; and the goods are disposed of by auction, to the highest bidder. The remainder are carried to the dependent settlements.

The ships return to Europe, laden with pepper from Malabar, saltpetre from Scindi, and  
stuffs

stuffs from Surat. The crews carry home parcels of perfumes, gums, and spices of different sorts, the produce of India.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Antiquities of the Isle Elephanta.*

THIS small isle, situate near Bombay, belongs to the Mahrattas, and is inhabited by an hundred poor Indian families. Its proper name is *Gali Pouri*. The Europeans call it Elephanta, from the statue of an elephant, formed of black stone, which stands in this island, in the open plain, near the shore. This island being of small importance, the Mahrattas take no care of it; and the English are at liberty to visit it without passports, which are requisite, when they go to the isle of *Salset*.

Several travellers mention the isle of Elephanta, and the Indian temple in it; but this only in a transient manner, and without seeming to have known all the importance of those remains of remote antiquity. To me the temple appeared so remarkable, that I visited the island three different times, in order to draw, and describe its curiosities.

It is an hundred and twenty feet long, and the same in breadth, without including the measurement of the chapels and the adjacent chambers. Its height within is nearly fifteen feet, although the floor has been greatly raised by the accession of dust, and of the sediment of the water which falls into it in the rainy season. The whole of this vast structure, situate in a hill of considerable height, is cut out in the solid rock. The pillars supporting the roof are also parts of the rock which have been left standing by the architect. They are of an uncommon order; but have an agreeable enough effect.

The walls of this temple are ornamented with figures in *bas-relief*, so prominent, that they are joined to the rock only by the back. Many of these figures are of a colossal size; being some 10, some 12, and some even 14 feet high. Neither in design, nor in execution, indeed, can these *bas-reliefs* be compared with the works of the Grecian sculptors. But they are greatly superior in elegance to the remains of the ancient Egyptian sculpture. They are also finer than the *bas-reliefs* from the ruins of Persepolis. No doubt, then, but the arts were cultivated by the ancient Indians with better success than is commonly supposed.

Probably these figures mark events relative to the mythology and fabulous history of the Indians,

dians, for they seem to be representative of Gods and Heroes. But, to be able to understand them, we should know more than we at present do of the manners and religion of this ancient nation. The modern Indians are so ignorant, that I could obtain from them no information concerning those antiquities. One man, who pretended to explain the character of one of the largest statues, assured me that it was *Kaun*, one of their ancient fabulous princes, famous for his cruelties committed upon his sister's children. This statue, which is in other respects well formed, has eight arms; an emblem of power, which the Indians give to their allegorical figures.

I have given designs of these allegorical figures, (in the larger works), which will make them better understood than dry description can. There are, however, some particulars about them, which prove the stability of the manners of the Indians, and afford points for the comparison of ancient with modern customs. None of these figures has a beard; and all of them very scanty whiskers. At present, the young Indians wear all whiskers; and such as are advanced in life leave commonly the whole beard to grow. The lips of these figures are always thick; and their ears are lengthened out by large pendants; ornaments which they almost all wear. Several

of

them wear a small cord, in the fashion of a scarf; a mode now prevalent among the Bra-  
mins.

One woman has but a single breast; from which it should seem, that the story of the Amazons was not unknown to the old Indians. Several figures, as well masculine as feminine, have one arm leaning on the head of a male, or a female dwarf; from which it should seem that these monsters of the human species have always been an object of luxury and magnificence among the tasteless great. Several of these figures have hair on the head, which seems not to be of its native growth, but is perfectly like a wig; so that this covering for the head appears to be of very ancient invention. The female bosom is always perfectly round; from which it seems that the Indian fashion of wearing thin wooden cases upon the breasts is also very ancient. One woman too appears bearing her child in the same attitude which is still in use among the Indians, and which forms those children to stand firmly upon their feet and legs.

The head-dress of these female figures is commonly an high-crowned bonnet. I have, however, observed also a turban. Some are bare-headed, and have their hair at least well combed, if it is not rather a periwig they wear. Several are naked. The dress of others is more  
nearly

nearly like that of the moderns. Some of the women wear a cap. In many places the handkerchief, still used through all India, is observable in the hands of the interior figures.

In several parts of these *bas-reliefs* appears the famous *Cobra de Capelle*, a sort of serpent, which the human figures treat with great familiarity. These serpents are still very common in the isle of Elephanta, the inhabitants of which are not afraid of them, but say that they are friendly to man, and do no harm, unless when intentionally provoked. Certain it is, however, that their bite is mortal.

On each side of this temple is a chapel, nine feet high, consequently lower than the principal building. The walls of these chapels are also covered with *bas-relief* figures, on a smaller scale than those upon the walls of the temple. Behind the chapels are three chambers, the walls of which display no sculptures; their uses I could not conjecture.

The smallest of the chapels, having no sculptured figure, but that of the God *Gonnis*, is still in a state of neat preservation, which must be owing to the cares of the present inhabitants, whom I saw repair thither to perform their devotions. Before the entrance into this chapel, I found a pile of shapeless stones, newly bedaubed with red paint. I should suppose that the mo-

dern Indians no longer adore their ancient Gods, but have adopted new objects of worship, whom they represent by stones painted red, for want of more artificial statues. In many places through India, indeed, may be seen similar piles of red stones, which are held in high veneration among a people who have now almost entirely lost all knowledge of the fine arts.

The rest of the temple being perfectly neglected, is now the haunt of serpents and beasts of prey. One dares not enter it without first making several discharges of fire arms, to expel those creatures. Even after using this precaution, a Dutchman was once in great danger from swarms of wasps of a peculiar species, which he had roused from their nests with his gun. In the hot season, horned cattle resort to the lower chambers of the temple, to drink of the water which is deposited there during the rains.

As little is there any hope of obtaining any information from the present inhabitants of the island, concerning the period when this temple was built. Those good folks relate with simplicity, that a number of strangers came one night into the island, and reared this edifice before the return of day-light. Men seem fond of the marvellous in India, as elsewhere.

On a hill, at a small distance, there is said to be another temple. But, to it, there is no open road ;

road; and, as the grass was at that time very tall, my guides would not accompany me thither, for fear of serpents and wild animals.

Besides, this is not the only old temple remaining in India. I have already mentioned those in the isle of Salsset, three of which standing at *Kanari*, *Poniser*, and *Monpefer*, have been described by M. Anquetil. I have already mentioned, that access into this island cannot be obtained without a passport from the Mahratta governor at *Tana*, or perhaps from the sovereign. Such a passport I durst not ask for the purpose of gratifying my curiosity as to the temples; as the Mahrattas had lately seized a vessel, and were not, even then, in a good understanding with the English.

*Freyer* has described the temple of *Dunganes*, and *Thevenot* that of *Iloura*, both hewn out in the solid rock, like that of Elephanta. Near Fort Victoria is another very large temple, hewn out also in solid rock, and divided into twenty-five separate chambers. One perfectly like this is to be found in the vicinity of the town of *Teridschanapalli*.

These monuments of the ancient splendour of the Indians deserve, upon several accounts, the attention of our men of learning. We go to see pyramids nowise worthy of comparison with these pagodas. It would require more labour and



and skill to cut out such spacious apartments in rocks, and to ornament them with such large and beautiful pieces of sculpture, than to raise those huge piles of soft, calcareous stones, which the builder found ready at his hand. The pyramids appear to have been reared by the toil of barbarous slavery; the temples of India are the works of a magnificent and enlightened people.

The Indians are, besides, the most ancient of the nations whose history is known, and have best retained their ancient usages and opinions. We know that the inhabitants of other countries in the east, the Greeks, and perhaps too the Egyptians, drew the first elements of their knowledge from India. It may farther be presumed, that the examination of Indian antiquities would throw new light on those opinions and modes of worship which were by degrees diffused through other parts of the east, and spread, at last, into Europe. These discoveries, again, would throw new light on the antiquities of other nations.

These hopes are the more plausible, as the Indians have still books which were written in the most remote times, and of which the language is at present understood. The books might explain the monuments; and the monuments again might serve as a commentary upon those books, and the history of the nation.

It were to be wished, that some enlightened scholars would undertake a voyage into India for the purpose of investigating its antiquities. But, such an undertaking is more than can be expected from any private person, and might be worthy of the patronage of a prince or a nation. The Portuguese, who were for two centuries masters of Sasset, must have been well acquainted with these temples, for they converted that of *Kanari* into a church. But, instead of seeking to make those monuments known to other nations, they sought to conceal them, and covered the finest of the *bas-reliefs* with plaster. The English, although they have been settled at Bombay for these hundred years now, have still neglected these researches. It is to be hoped that they will at length think of meriting the gratitude of the public, by bringing those hidden curiosities to light, which lie in the extensive conquests on the continent, now possessed by that nation.

## SECTION XXXI.

## VOYAGE TO SURAT.

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CHAP. I.

*Occasion of this Voyage, and Departure from Bombay.*

THE reader will recollect that Mr Cramer and I were both sick when we arrived at Bombay in September 1763. Our intention was to return into Europe through Turkey, and to take our passage on board a ship of the Company's which was to sail for Bafra the beginning of the next year ; but, the state of our health would not allow us to take that opportunity. Mr Cramer, sinking at length under his complaints, died at Bombay, on the 10th of February 1764, in spite of the cares of a skilful English physician.

Being now the sole survivor of all our party, I thought it my duty to attend to my own preservation, and to provide for the safe conveyance of our papers to Europe, as I feared that these would be lost, if I also should die by the way.

Foreseeing

Foreseeing that I should have to undergo the same fatigues in passing through Turkey, which I had already encountered in Arabia, and which the weak state of my health was unfit to bear, I resolved to set out straight for London, by the first ship which should sail for Europe. In the mean time, to gratify my curiosity with a sight of Surat, I took the opportunity of going on board an English ship bound on a voyage to that port.

We sailed from Bombay on the 24th of March 1764, and were obliged to stop at *Mulim*, a small town in the northern part of the isle, where a member of the Council of Bombay constantly resides. An incident which took place at this time may serve as an instance of the military spirit and skill of the Portuguese. Proud of their ancient conquests, they scorn to make peace with any of the Indian nations, all of whom they regard as rebels. Being thus in terms of continual hostility with their neighbours, they dare not sail these seas without an escort. A small fleet of merchant ships bound from Goa to *Diu*, under the protection of two frigates, was seen, one evening, off Bombay. In the night we heard a brisk firing of guns, and imagined that the Portuguese were engaged with the Mahrattas. But, in the morning, it appeared that their exploits had ended merely in the  
destruction

destruction of a quantity of bamboos, from 30 to 40 feet high, which the fishermen had set up in a sand bank for the purposes of their fishing. Those valiant Portuguese had taken the bamboos for the masts of an hostile fleet. To crown their glory, the admiral found himself compelled by the governor of Bombay to pay damages to the fishermen.

On the 26th of March we arrived in the road of Surat, at the distance of three German miles from the city. We went on shore at *Domus*, a village distinguished by the residence of some, and by a vast Indian fig-tree, which is held in high veneration. Of this tree (the *Ficus vasta* of Linnæus,) I have already spoken in giving the natural history of Arabia. To the description above given of it, I may here add, that it grows to a great age; the new shoots from the branches of the primary stem continuing to nourish the top of the tree, even after the parent stock is entirely decayed.

At *Domus* we took a *Kakkri*, the carriage common in the country, which is neither more nor less than a covered cart, drawn by two oxen, which are driven by a peasant seated on the pole. I had here an instance of the great dryness of this country, for the movement of our light carriage raised a cloud of dust about us.

I never suffered so much from the dust, even in caravans of some hundreds of camels, horses, and mules.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the City of Surat, and its Environs.*

THIS city stands in a large and fertile plain, on the banks of a considerable river, named *Tappi*. On the land side, it is encompassed with two brick walls, which divide it into the inner and the outer town. The citadel stands within the inner, on the shore of the *Tappi*, and is divided by trenches from the town. One may walk round the outer wall in two hours and a half; the space which it incloses is chiefly occupied by gardens, having but a very few houses.

The larger houses are flat-roofed here, as through the rest of the east, with courts before them. The houses of the common people are high-roofed. Although Surat has been long under the dominion of the Mahometan Moguls, yet here is no handsome mosque with towers, as among the Turks and Arabians. The squares of this city are large, and the streets spacious, but not paved; so that the dust is insufferable. Each street has gates of its own, with which it

is shut up in times of turbulence ; and these are as frequent here as at Cairo.

At Surat provisions are plenteous and cheap ; the air, too, is wholesome, notwithstanding the warmth of the climate. I here observed Fahrenheit's thermometer at  $98^{\circ}$  in the month of March, while the wind blew from the north. In the month of May the thermometer stood at  $93^{\circ}$  degrees at Bombay, which lies two degrees farther to the south.

One thing unfavourable for Surat, is, that ships cannot enter the harbour, because the *Tappi* is full of sand-banks. This river is too low in the dry season ; and in the rains swells too suddenly, to such a height as to overflow all the neighbourhood. Were the river confined by dikes, the stream which, during the rains, often rises eight and twenty feet above its ordinary level, would carry away all the sand, and thus clearing the channel, would afford ships access to the very walls. But, the despotic governments of Asia neglect every thing that might contribute to the general good of their subjects.

General toleration and entire liberty are enjoyed in this city by all religious professions ; and its inhabitants are accordingly very numerous. The Europeans residing here estimate the population of the city at a million of souls.

But

But this calculation is evidently above the truth, —by two thirds, I have reason to believe.

One thing singular in Surat is, that here is no hospital for human beings, but an extensive establishment of this nature for sick or maimed animals. When the Europeans turn out an old horse, or any other domestic animal, to perish as useless, the Indians voluntarily assume the care of it, and place it in this house, which is full of infirm, decrepid cows, sheep, rabbits, hens, pigeons, &c. I saw in it a great tortoise, which was blind and helpless, and, as I was told, 125 years of age. The charitable Indians keep a physician of purpose for these animals.

The environs of Surat are not without gardens, which are the property either of Europeans, or of natives of the country. The finest of those belonging to Europeans is the property of the Dutch East India Company. Its aspect is rich and charming.

To get an idea of the character of an Indian garden, I went to see one which was formed by a late Nabob, at the expence of 500,000 rupees. This garden is of considerable extent, but has not the least appearance of regularity in the design, and has in it nothing in the fashion of our gardens, but a few ponds and fountains: the rest is a confused medley of buildings and small orchards. Among the buildings is one of great dimensions,



dimensions, having baths and saloons, and ornamented with the magnificence of India, which bears no resemblance to ours. The other buildings are *harams* for the Nabob's wives, entirely separate from each other, so that each lady can hold her little court apart. Every haram has some one good apartment; but all the rest of it consists of very narrow chambers for the slaves. What struck me particularly in this garden, was the passage from one suite of rooms to another, by paths so narrow, so winding, and so blocked up by doors, as to afford a strong instance of the distrust with which the unfortunate great in despotic countries regard all about them; so that they are never free from anxiety, and are obliged to stand continually on their guard against surprise.

I should have wished to draw a plan of Surat. But I soon found that the Europeans in India would not leave me so much at liberty, in this respect, as the Turks and Arabians had done. The climate of hot countries, and the nature of the government of settlements so distant from the mother country, seem to alter the national character of the people of Europe. The English governor of Surat would not allow a Frenchman to live in a high apartment from which he had a view of the citadel. At Mokha, I was told of an Arabian merchant who had languish-  
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ed some years in the prisons of Batavia, for having had the curiosity to measure the dimensions of a cannon.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of the Inhabitants of Surat, and some Peculiar Customs.*

A GREAT commercial city must be peopled by men of different nations. The principal inhabitants of Surat are Mahometans, and mostly strangers, although employed in the service of the government. They are equally zealous in the observance of their law as the Turks and Arabians. Although of the sect of the Sunnites, they tolerate the Shiites, and even permit them to celebrate the festival of *Haffcin*. They make no scruple of drinking wine publicly, or of lending money upon interest.

All people of distinction in Surat, and through the rest of India, speak and write the Persian language. Hence has this language been received at the courts, and the knowledge of it is very useful for the dispatch of business. In trade, corrupt Portuguese is the language used; and this is in India what the *Lingua Franca* is in the Levant.

The

The Mussulmans of Surat bring about them a great many *Fakirs* of their own religion, who are the most insolent beggars in the world. Those *Fakirs* will often sit down before a house, and continue there till the owner pay the sum they ask, or make a composition with them. As the police interferes not to check these insolent mendicants, people must be content with getting quit of them at any price.

At Surat, I had occasion to witness the Mussulman procession at the festival of Bairam. The counsellor from Bombay, who resides in the citadel of Surat, and represents a Nabob, is obliged to announce this ceremony by a discharge of cannons, and to assist at it in person. It is a strange sight, to see an English merchant in the European dress, attended by a party of British soldiers, and with the train of an Indian prince, conduct and regulate a religious festival of the Mahometans. The English director made the Indians sensible of his importance upon this occasion, by refusing to discharge his cannons in the night; a favour requested of him by the Nabob of the city, in order to give the people timely warning of the approach of the festival.

In this procession there was nothing remarkable, except the numbers of *kakkris*, *palanquins*, and horses, a few cannons, a great deal of martial music, and the Nabob's soldiers. The governor

vernor rode upon an elephant, on the back of which he sat on a sort of throne, raised upon four pillars. This elephant was, like most of the horses and oxen which drew the *kakkris*, painted red.

Kakkris, the carriages most common through India, are of a very simple construction, run upon two wheels, and are drawn by oxen: the driver sits on a large pole, consisting of several bamboos. It is not in any ornaments about these vehicles, but in the cattle which draw them, that the object of pride and expence to the Indian lies; a pair of white oxen for one of these carriages will cost 600 rupces. These oxen have the points of their horns ornamented with silver; their pace is quick, but less so than that of horses.

The citizens of Surat display their magnificence likewise in their palanquins. A palanquin is known to be a sort of couch suspended from a bamboo, and borne by four men. The traveller reclines in this vehicle, and is shaded from the sun by a curtain. A palanquin, completely ornamented with silver, covered with rich stuffs, and suspended upon a handsome bamboo, properly bent, will cost above 200 pounds Sterling. The bamboo only of the governor of Bombay's palanquin, exclusive of the other ornaments, cost 125 pounds

pounds Sterling. The bearers of the palanquins are Indian servants, who wear no clothes, except a small lincn cloth about their loins, with close flat bonnets on their heads, as liveries, and are commonly employed in keeping the rooms clean within the houses. The European ladies are at first shocked at the indecency of being carried by naked men, but soon learn to accustom themselves to it. The palanquins of the Mahometan ladies are incommodious wooden boxes, entirely close, and fixed upon a straight pole.

The Hindoos, the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, of whom I shall soon speak more at length, compose the most considerable part of the population of Surat. They are almost all of the cast of the Banians; and hence their skill and dexterity in matters of calculation and economy often raise them to places of considerable trust, in the collection of the taxes and customs for the Mahometans. These Banians, being born to trade, have engrossed the commerce of India to such a degree, that all foreign nations are obliged to employ them as brokers; in which employment they give better satisfaction than the Jews in Turkey. Europeans have never found reason to repent the intrusting even of their whole fortune to the Banians, who continue to give astonishing proofs of their probity  
and

and fidelity. Some of them are very rich ; but they live all in a style of moderate simplicity, wearing for dress only a plain robe of white cotton.

At Surat are numbers of *Perfces* or Persians, who are skilful merchants, industrious artisans, and good servants. In the same city are also Armenians, Georgians, and Jews ; but of none of these any considerable number. The Indian Catholics, commonly called Portuguese, from their speaking the India dialect of the Portuguese language, are numerous here. At Surat, the day is reckoned from sunset to sunset, and is divided, not into 24 hours, but into 60 *garri*s. Here are no clocks ; the progress of the day is measured by different means. In a conspicuous situation, a man stands to put a cup of copper, pierced with a hole in the bottom, from time to time under water ; every time the cup sinks, a *garri* is counted, and the man announces its lapse by striking the number which it makes upon a plate of metal that sounds like a clock. Each *garri* consists of 24 of our minutes. In the houses of the great, too, where clocks and watches are not wanting, this old fashion of measuring time is still kept up.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the Government of Surat, and the Revolutions it has undergone.*

SURAT, and the great district of which it is the capital, belonged for a long time to the great Mogul, who, to keep so distant a province the more effectually in obedience, put it under the government of two Nabobs independent on one another. The one resided in the city, and was properly the governor of the province. The other had the command of the citadel, and enjoyed the title of admiral, with a small revenue appropriated to the maintenance of a small fleet for the defence of the coast against pirates.

After Shah Nadir's expedition into Indostan, the distant Nabobs of this vast empire aimed all at independence, and left the Mogul nothing but a shadow of authority, asking him only for form's sake to confirm them in their places. *Teg Beg Khan*, Nabob of Surat, a rich and powerful man, followed this example, and procured his brother to be declared Nabob of the citadel. The two brothers then looked upon the whole province as their patrimony, and acquired immense wealth.

Teg

Teg Beg Khan dying in 1746, without children, left his fortune to his relations, by which several of them were raised to a condition which enabled them to aspire to the government of the city. His brother died on the following year; and his widow, a woman extremely rich and ambitious, strove to make her son-in-law Nabob at once of the town and of the citadel.

The contest of the different competitors for the supreme authority produced a civil war in the town of Surat, like that which arises from time to time among the Beks of Cairo, and of which we in Europe can form no idea. Each of the rivals raised as many troops as he possibly could; with these he cantoned and intrenched himself in his houses and gardens, and from time to time endeavoured to surprize or drive away his opponents. During these hostile operations, which were not attended with great slaughter, the inhabitants were content with shutting the gates nearest to the scene of action, and continued to go about their ordinary affairs, without fear of being pillaged. Nay, they were sure of receiving compensation whenever any casual injury was done to any person through means of the disturbances. Hence trade suffered no interruption.

Some of the rival candidates imprudently called in the Mahrattas: and they, without doing  
any



any thing for any party, made the victors pay for their assistance, although they had apparently favoured the vanquished. Since that time, the Mahrattas have enjoyed a third part of the amount of the customs of Surat; and one of their officers constantly attends to receive this tribute.

The English and Dutch had always kept their factories in a state of defence, and on the occasion of the disturbances, they increased their military preparations. The nobles of the country then had recourse to those powerful traders. Each of the two European nations took part with one of the competitors, furnished him with ammunition, intrenched themselves in their factories, and fought against each other, although not openly at war. The Nabob, protected by the English, was at last expelled from the city. But, in 1758, he returned; and his mother-in-law, the rich widow above-mentioned, made so good an use of her treasures, that the Nabob for whom he had been expelled was obliged to yield to him the government of the city.

When the English saw the city in the hands of their creature, they began to think seriously of gaining possession of the citadel. The council of Bombay, in 1759, sent Mr Spencer, one of their number, a man of abilities, and beloved by the Indians, to Surat, with a considerable force.

force. The Nabob opened the gates of the city to the English, and allowed them to lay siege to the citadel undisturbed. It was taken in a few days. To avoid giving offence to the Indians, the English declared, that they made the conquest in the name of the great Mogul, and waved his flag from the walls of the citadel.

This expedition thus accomplished, Mr Spencer sent a long representation to the Court of Delhi, in which he stated the reasons which had induced the merchants of Surat to put themselves under the protection of the English, and to expel the usurper Nabob from the citadel. He asserted that those petty tyrants had suffered the fleet necessary for the protection of trade to fall into a state of decay, and that none but the English could restore it. He offered, at the same time, that if the Mogul would grant to the Company the post of Admiral, with the revenues annexed to it, they would maintain a fleet which should give full security to trade. These facts were attested, and the proposals seconded by the principal inhabitants of Surat, who signed the memorial. The great Mogul, who in his present weakness durst not send a governor to the province, but considered it as lost, readily granted the Company's request; and a member of the council of Bombay now discharges the office of Nabob and Admiral at Surat. Upon this

this title, the Company enjoy a third of the revenue from the customs of this city, with other funds of income still more considerable; which enables them to keep on foot a body of troops, with some small ships of war.

The English are, at present, the actual sovereigns of Surat. They keep the Nabob of the city in a state of absolute dependence; allowing him only an income on which he may live suitably to his dignity. The Indians are in part content with their new masters. The merchants are no longer in danger of the avaritious extortions of the Nabobs; yet they complain of the selfish spirit of those masters. The Indians dare not sail without a passport from the admiral. When the English wish to send goods to any port, the Indians are denied passports to that port till the season of the monsoon is over; whereas the English are favoured, so that they have all the time necessary to pre-occupy the market. Of this I have seen instances; which, if frequently repeated, must undoubtedly ruin the trade of the natives.

## CHAP. V.

*Trade of Surat.*

THE great trade carried on at Surat renders this city the store-house of the most precious productions of Indostan. Hither is brought from the interior parts of the empire an immense quantity of goods, which the merchants carry in their ships to the Arabic Gulph, the Persian Gulph, the coast of Malabar, the coast of Coromandel, and even to China. The provinces near this city are full of manufactures of all sorts.

Ship-building is a branch of the business carried on here. In this art, indeed, the Indians are servile imitators of the Europeans, but they have in great plenty, and at a low price, that excellent wood called *Tæk*, which is not liable to be attacked by worms, and is so lasting, that at Surat there are to be seen ships 90 years old which are still in a condition to sail the sea.

Of foreign nations, the Dutch have next after the English, the most considerable establishment at Surat. They have here a director, several merchants, a number of writers and servants, and a few soldiers. Their trade has, however.

however, declined, till it has become trifling. The affairs of this nation in India seem to be rather in disorder, since the English obtained possession of the citadel. The Nabob of the city has obliged the Dutch to pay him 90,000 rupees, and send away the cannons of their factory.

The affairs of the French are yet in a worse state. Since the loss of Pondicherry, their director has been so neglected, that he can hardly find credit for the means of a scanty subsistence. This nation are here in no estimation, but what is paid to their capuchin friars, who are generally beloved and respected at Surat. These good regular clergy have done essential service to the public, by keeping a register of all events that have happened in Indostan, from 1676 to the present time.

Such nearly is also the condition of the Portuguese in India. In my time, they had a Jesuit of Hamburgh for their director. I have been told, however, that, since I left Surat, they have raised their trade, by sending thither a director of their own nation who was born at Goa.

There sometimes arrive at Surat ships belonging to nations who have no permanent establishments in that city. A Danish vessel put in here while the citadel was besieged, and was favoured with the protection of the English, to whom the captain did good service upon the occasion.

cession. In consequence of the favour which he thus obtained, he accomplished his business in a manner very much to his advantage. A Swede, who came hither some years after, was less fortunate, although the Nabob had, for the payment of a moderate duty, allowed him freedom of trade. Selling his iron and copper at a lower rate than the English, he soon disposed of his whole cargo advantageously as he thought. But, when he was preparing to depart, the Nabob demanded from him an extraordinary duty of 100,000 rupees, and put him under arrest, till it was paid. The Swede not daring to apply to the English, with whom he suspected his mischance to originate, directed his ship to sail for China, and remained under arrest. At last he compounded with the Nabob, who for 20,000 rupees, set him at liberty. Such treatment must deter other nations from trying their fortune at Surat.

In all appearance, the English must shortly engross the whole trade of this city. Being at once sovereigns and rich merchants, they have every means in their power by which foreign nations can be excluded, or the Indians restrained from this source of opulence.

## CHAP. VI.

*Manners of the Hindoos.*

THE Hindoos are the primary inhabitants of the vast empire of Indostan. Having lived among these people at Bombay and Surat, I shall here bring together some observations which I made upon the Hindoos in those two cities, and also upon the *Perjees*, a stranger colony settled in this part of India.

This people, perhaps the earliest civilized nation in the world, are mild, laborious, and naturally virtuous in their dispositions. All who have opportunities of observing the lives of the Hindoos, admire their patience, probity, and benevolence; but they are at the same time the most unsocial people in the world. By their manners and religious principles, the Hindoos detach themselves not only from other nations, whom they consider as impure races; but even the different casts or tribes of themselves have little mutual intercourse. No Hindoo will eat with a stranger; nor any Hindoo of a superior cast with another of a cast that is inferior. A poor servant, if a *Bramin*, would think himself dishonoured

honoured by sitting down at table with a *Rajaput* or *Banian*, although his master.

It is generally known, that the Indians are distributed into a number of tribes or casts. As far as I could learn, there are four principal casts; the *Bramins*, or priests; the *Rajaputs*, or men of the sword; the *Banians*, or merchants; and that of the artisans and labourers. These four general casts are subdivided into more than 80 others, each of which has its own ceremonies, and patron deities, as I have been assured by several persons.

Those permanent divisions have led some travellers into the mistake that the son was always obliged to embrace his father's profession. The son may not quit his native cast, but may choose among the employments which are practised by that cast. There are Bramins who hold sovereign authority; as, for instance, the prince of the Mahrattas. These same Bramins become magistrates under the government of Rajaput princes, and farmers of the revenue under the Mahometans. I have been acquainted with Bramins who were merchants, and with Rajaputs and Banians who were artisans.

This liberty is the more necessary, as it is impossible for a Hindoo to be received from an inferior into a superior cast. I was told of a singular instance of such a promotion; but even it



I will not warrant as true. A Rajaput sovereign desiring to be admitted into the cast of the Bramins, the priests, after a long refusal, at length granted his request, on the condition of his setting up in the temple the statue of a cow, of such a size, that a man might enter it behind, and go out by its mouth. The sovereign, after passing several times through this golden cow, was supposed to be regenerated, and received into the cast of the Bramins.

This custom hinders strangers from being naturalized among the Hindoos, or embracing their religion; and there is no people less inclined to make profelytes. But, it is their rigorous observation of their ancient laws of separation which has reduced these people to their present humiliated state. If, at the time of the conquest, the Hindoos had suffered the Tartars to incorporate with the vanquished nation; the conquerors must have adopted the manners and the religion of their new subjects. Their conduct in China gives probability to this idea. But the Hindoos expressing so great an aversion for their new masters, made them prefer Mahometism, and forced them to bring in from time to time foreign Mahometans, to govern the conquered people. Since that period, the Hindoos have been an abject herd of slaves, subject to the vexatious oppression of a despot who re-  
turns

turns the contempt which they have expressed for him.

The power of the Mahometans indeed becomes daily less: and there are at present some Hindoo princes who may restore their nation to its ancient splendour. The Mahrattas have successfully begun a project which has this aspect. It is the exorbitant power of the English that at present retards the progressive improvement of the Hindoos. But, when this colossal statue, whose feet are of clay, and which has been raised by conquering merchants, shall be broken in pieces, an event which may fall out sooner than is supposed, then shall Indostan become again a flourishing country.

In almost all the circumstances of their mode of life, the Hindoos distinguish themselves from the rest of mankind. Their usual diet consists of rice, milk, and fruits. The law, however, which forbids them to eat animal food, seems to have been rather suggested by the climate, than by religious consideration. The Rajaputs eat mutton, as well as the flesh of some other animals; but all the casts alike respect the cow, and abstain from eating beef. None of the casts are so much straitened in respect to food as the Bramins; they deny themselves the use of most leguminous vegetables which are eaten by the other Hindoos; nor will they eat of any dish  
that

that has not been dressed by a man of their own cast, or drink water which a Bramin has not drawn. They observe frequent fasts, insomuch that I was told by a Bramin, that it was almost impossible for any person to confine himself to a strict obedience to the precepts of their religion in respect to regimen.

These priests also impose upon the people a multiplicity of minute observances in their eating, which are all founded on the chimerical notion of the possibility of contracting pollution by communication in this way. The Hindoos in common are averse to use the same dish with a stranger, or with a man of a different cast. They will rather use broad leaves for plates, and drink out of the hollow of the hand.

All the parts of the Hindoo dress differ in form from those used among the Turks and Arabians. Merchants, however, wear a turban, the cap, and a long robe of white cotton cloth. Their slippers are fitted with metal clasps. The lower people go naked, wearing only a piece of linen round the loins, and a turban on the head. Under rain the peasants put on a hood, which is formed of the leaves of the palm-tree. This custom of India has been already mentioned by Herodotus.

The dress of the ordinary women consists of a large linen cloth, striped red, which they wrap

wrap about the loins, and another still larger, which they fold round the body and bring over the head. They wear all two wooden cases upon their breasts; which hinders the neck from being ever drawn down among the Hindoo as among the Mahometan women. These good Hindoo females are very industrious. At Bombay, I saw women earn a livelihood by the hardest labour, who yet wore rings in their nose, and in their ears, on their fingers, on their arms, and on their feet. But these were ornaments of luxury which descend from generation to generation.

The Hindoos still retain the practice of burning their dead. But the European and Mahometan governments prohibit, and the Mahrattas seldom allow the living wife to burn herself on the funeral pile of her deceased husband. A Bramin told me, that his family had been highly distinguished, by his grandmother having, in honour of her virtue, obtained permission to burn herself with her husband.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the Religion of the Hindoos.*

AN European wishing to acquire a knowledge of the religion of these people, cannot gain much information from the Bramins, who never study any of our languages. I was acquainted with some Banians who spoke English, and from them I received some knowledge on this head.

They all unanimously assured me, that the most sensible and enlightened Hindoos acknowledged and worshipped only one Supreme Being. But the Bramins have found out inferior deities, accommodated to the weak conceptions of the people, who could not comprehend abstract ideas. if they were not represented by images. They agreed too, that the Bramins had, for their own purposes, clogged, by degrees, the original simplicity of their religion, with absurd fables, and ridiculous pieces of superstition. I mentioned their passionate veneration for the cow, and their various representations of her. As to this, they replied, that in those images they revered only the divine goodness, which had  
given

given man an animal so gentle, and of such indispensable utility.

I could learn nothing certain concerning their inferior deities, whom they seem to revere rather as saints and patrons. A Banian compared their three principal deities, *Brama*, *Vishnou*, and *Medeo*, to the Christian Trinity.

The Hindoos believe all in the doctrines of the metempsychosis, and of the purification of souls by their passage through several different bodies. This doctrine is not however the only cause of their abstinence from every thing that has life in it. In hot countries, the flesh of animals in general, and of the ox in particular, is thought very unwholesome food. The Rajaputs eat flesh, and the Mahrattas furnish the Europeans whom they take prisoners in war, with animal food, without scruple. It might be supposed that the singular charity of the Indians for animals takes its origin from this opinion.

The precept of purification with water is rigidly observed through all India. At Surat, I saw every morning crowds of women and young girls going out to bathe in the Tappi. They gave their clothes to some Bramins who sat on the banks, and, after washing, changed their wet clothes for those dry dresses, with such dexterity, that not the smallest part of the body could be seen. The Bramins then made a red mark

on the brow of each, and, after a short prayer, they returned all to town.

This daily sanctification seems to be the chief employment of the Bramins. They are also called in, on the occasion of the birth of a child; they tie round his arm a small cord, which he wears through life as a mark of his extraction. They assist also at nuptials; but only by fixing the hour which is favourable for the contract, not by pronouncing any nuptial benediction.

The Hindoo festivals are sufficiently numerous, and are partly civil, partly religious. They celebrate the return of the new year with illuminations, and rejoicings of all sorts. The festival of the cocoa-nut seems to have originated with the most remote antiquity. At another festival, in commemoration of a certain hero, they bedaub one another with red paint, to represent the hero returning from battle, covered over with blood.

They have likewise two orders of Fakirs or mendicant pilgrims, the *Bargais* and the *Gusseins*, who travel about armed, and in troops of some thousands. These two orders are sworn enemies; and whenever they meet, bloody combats ensue. During my stay at Surat, a little army of these Fakirs encamped near the city. The government did not like their visit; and  
would

would permit them to enter only in small numbers.

The stories of the ridiculous penitence of the Fakirs are well known. Their fanaticism has not yet become cold ; and there died lately at Surat one of these madmen, who had lived shut up in a cage for twenty years, with his arms constantly raised above his head.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the Persians.*

AT Bombay, at Surat, and in the vicinity of these cities, is a colony of ancient Persians, who took refuge in India, when their country was conquered by the Mahometan Arabs, eleven centuries since. They are called Persians. Being beloved by the Hindoos, they multiply exceedingly ; whereas their countrymen in the province of Kerman are visibly diminishing under the yoke of the Moslem Persians.

They are a gentle, quiet, and industrious race. They live in great harmony among themselves, make common contributions for the aid of their poor, and suffer none of their number to ask alms from people of a different religion. They are equally ready to employ their money  
and



and credit to screen a brother of their fraternity from the abuses of justice. When a Persee behaves ill, he is expelled from their communion. They apply to trade, and exercise all sorts of professions.

The Persees have as little knowledge of circumcision as the Hindoos. Among them, a man marries only one wife, nor ever takes a second, unless when the first happens to be barren. They give their children in marriage at six years of age; but the young couple continue to separate, in the houses of their parents, till they attain the age of puberty. Their dress is the same as that of the Hindoos, except that they wear under each ear a tuft of hair, like the modern Persians. They are much addicted to astrology, although very little skilled in astronomy.

They retain the singular custom of exposing their dead to be eaten by birds of prey, instead of interring or burning them. I saw on a hill at Bombay a round tower, covered with planks of wood, on which the Persees lay out their dead bodies. When the flesh is devoured, they remove the bones into two chambers at the bottom of the tower.

The Persees, followers of the religion of *Zerakust* or *Zoroaster*, adore one God only, Eternal and Almighty. They pay, however, a certain worship to the sun, the moon, the stars, and to fire,

fire, as visible images of the invisible divinity. Their veneration for the element of fire induces them to keep a sacred fire constantly burning, which they feed with odoriferous wood, both in the temples, and in the houses of private persons, who are in easy circumstances. In one of their temples at Bombay, I saw a fire which had burnt unextinguished for two centuries. They never *blow* out a light; lest their breath should soil the purity of the fire.

The religion of the Perses enjoins purifications as strictly as that of the Hindoos. The disciples of Zerdust are not, however, obliged to abstain from animal food. They have accustomed themselves to refrain from the flesh of the ox, because their ancestors promised the Indian prince who received them into his dominions never to kill horned cattle. This promise they continue to observe under the dominion of Christians and Mahometans. The horse is by them considered as the most impure of all animals, and regarded with extreme aversion.

Their festivals, denominated *Ghumbars*, which return frequently, and last upon each occasion five days, are all commemorations of some part of the work of Creation. They celebrate them not with splendour, or with any particular ceremonies; but only dress better during those five days,

days, perform some acts of devotion in their houses, and visit their friends.

Not having had opportunity to make any continued train of observations on the manners and religion of the Persees, I must refer the reader to the memoirs subjoined by *Mr Anquetil du Perron* to his translation of the *Zendavesta*, or sacred book of *Zoroaster*. It is well known that this learned Frenchman went to India of purpose to study the language and religion of the Persees.

The diversity of opinions and manners among the inhabitants of India is inconvenient for Europeans, who cannot have countrymen of their own for servants; which is the case with almost all foreign merchants. An European, who has none but natives of the country in his service, if he should wish to eat a hare and bacon, would find it no easy matter to procure these dishes. The Hindoo would not bring them to him, for he dares not touch a dead body; nor the Persee, because the hare is an unclean animal; nor yet the Musselman, for he dares not touch such dishes.

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## NOTES TO VOL. II.

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### NOTE A. p. 5.

I KNOW not if we should find a complete detail of the history of Arabia of such importance as may at first be imagined. Their local circumstances seem to have given a degree of permanency to the character of the inhabitants of this country; in consequence of which, the history of one or two centuries may be fairly esteemed equal to the history of the whole period of their national existence. Yet, as it seems probable that many of the circumjacent countries have received their first supplies of population from Arabia; it were, on this account, indeed, a desirable object to trace the progress

progress of their colonies, and the circumstances which excited among them the spirit of colonization. The Sabæans were probably a powerful nation in Arabia; and history relates, that Melek-Yafrik, one of their Monarchs, conducted the colony which first occupied the north-western division of Africa.

## NOTE B. p. 7.

SOME valuable information concerning the Arabians in the eastern parts of Africa may be seen in Bruce's travel; a book which I am happy to agree with the most respectable Reviewers, in considering as one of the most valuable presents that any traveller has for a long while made to the British Public.

## NOTE C. p. 8.

To Ludolff, Lobo, and especially to Bruce, I must refer the reader for the history of Abyssinia.

## NOTE D. p. 10.

BAILLY, late Mayor of Paris, in his History of Astronomy.

## NOTE E. p. 11.

PERHAPS the reader of Colonel Vallancey's writings may be persuaded that these inscriptions found at Persepolis, and in the interior parts of Arabia, are in the Ogham character of the old Irish.

## NOTE F. p. 12.

THESE remarks are ingenious. But, from the tenor of Sacred History, it should seem that the origin of the Jews is not less ancient than that of the Arabians. They are both from the same stock, and are collateral branches.

## NOTE G. p. 13.

EVERY reader will here think of the Historical Disquisition concerning India, with which the first Historian of the present age has lately favoured the world, in addition to his other works. The different channels through which the trade between Europe and Asia was successively carried on, are there ably traced; and the effects pointed out which its fluctuations produced upon the intermediate countries.

## NOTE H. p. 13.

THERE is very little probability, indeed, that any considerable number of the Arabians were ever converted to Christianity. They have always been chiefly idolaters, or Mahometans.

## NOTE I. p. 14.

PERHAPS the Caliphs might have been more successful in subjugating their fellow-countrymen, if Syria, India, Egypt, and Spain had not presented more inviting scenes of conquest and of empire.

## NOTE J. p. 20.

The Mahometan religion was introduced among the Moors nearly about the middle of the seventh century. The Moors, descendants of those Sabæans, who had anciently settled in that part of Africa, were subdued and incorporated with the victorious Moslems. Ever since that period, pastoral tribes of wandering Arabs have occupied Mount Atlas, and a considerable extent of the north-west division of *Africa*.

## NOTE K. p. 39.

FOR an account of the rites and ceremonies of the pilgrimage to Mecca, I must refer the reader to *Recueil des Rits Ceremonies du Pelerinage de la Mecque ; par M. Galland.*—*A Amsterdam, 1754.*—A most curious little work, which Galland has translated from the Arabic, and which I once intended to translate from the French, and insert here.

## NOTE L. p. 89.

SEE the Elder Pliny's account of Arabia in Book VI. of his Natural History.

## NOTE M. p. 92.

IT is folly to suppose that any literary art can make progress among the Mahometans, while despotism, indolence, and superstition, the great enemies of literary improvement, continue to maintain their ground among them.

## NOTE N. p. 107.

ONE cannot read such an account as this, without reflecting with pleasure, that the superior



rior activity and science of the Europeans have enabled them to engross the commerce of the universe.

NOTE N. p. 116.

MASKAT enjoys advantages of situation, which, under an enlightened government, might render its native inhabitants among the most enterprising and the richest merchants in the world.

NOTE O. p. 140.

HANWAY, and the travellers in Persia, may be consulted for the history of Nadir-Shah.

NOTE P. p. 203.

IT should seem, from what is here related, that the Arabians, notwithstanding the simplicity of their modes of life, are little less fantastic in their point of honour than our duellists of Europe.

NOTE Q. p. 205.

THE comparison is indeed fair and natural; and, after all the contests which have been agitated concerning the primary modes of government,

ment, the patriarchal has undoubtedly been the next after the paternal. By the *paternal* I mean the government of a Father over his Children ; by the *patriarchal*, that of a Head over a Family of relations.

## NOTE R. p. 230.

THE use of this *Busa* or *Bouza*, is one proof, among innumerable others, that mankind have been, in all ages, and in all states of society, passionately fond of fermented liquors. To what nastiness has not this taste occasionally prompted them?—Witness their use of *Kava* and *Koumifs*.

F I N I S.



